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Map of England and Wales

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Genealogical Research
in
England and Wales

VOL. I

Genealogical Research in England and Wales

VOL. I

DAVID E. GARDNER

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FRANK SMITH

Artwork by Mariel P. Gardner



BOOKCRAFT PUBLISHERS

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DEDICATION

To our ancestors who, surmounting great difficulties,
made our life and station possible;

To the record makers and record keepers past and present
through whose efforts so many records have been miraculously
preserved;

To everyone who has given service in making records more
readily available;

To those whose hearts have been turned to their fathers
and as a result have given time and means, often at great personal
sacrifice, so that the records of their ancestors might
be found;

To those who now toil and delve among the old and
musty records of the past, patiently and without discouragement;

To the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for
its lofty conception of the eternity of the family;

To all these this work is humbly dedicated.

F. S.

D. E. G.

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SUCCEEDING VOLUMES WILL INCLUDE, AMONG OTHER SUBJECTS, DISCUSSIONS OF:

Probate records; the records of the fifty-two counties of England and Wales; Borough and City records; Military and Naval records; helpful hints in determining ancestry; differences in Welsh research; fictitious pedigrees; topography, geography and maps; libraries, societies and records offices; historical events related to genealogical research; planning methodical research, recording data, organizing research; reading early English script; Chancery records.

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FOREFATHERS

*Here they went with smock and crook,
Toil'd in the sun, loll'd in the shade,
Here they muddled out the brook
And here their hatchet clear'd the glade;
Harvest supper woke their wit,
Huntsman's moon their wooings lit.*

*From this church they led their brides,
From this church themselves were led
Shoulder-high; on these waysides
Sat to take their beer and bread.
Names are gone — what men they were.
These their cottages declare.*

*Names are vanished, save the few
In the old brown Bible scrawled;
These were men of pith and thew
Whom the city never call'd;
Scarce could read or hold a quill,
Built the barn, the forge, the mill.*

*On the green they watch'd their sons
Playing till too dark to see,
As their fathers watch'd them once,
As my father once watch'd me;
While the bat and beetle flew
On the warm air webb'd with dew.*

*Unrecorded, unrenown'd.
Men from whom my ways begin,
Here I know you by your ground
But I know you not within—
There is silence, there survives
Not a moment of your lives.*

*Like the bee that now is blown
Honey-heavy on my hand,
From his toppling tansy-throne
In the green tempestuous land—
I'm in clover now, nor know
Who made honey long ago.¹*

Edmund Blunden (1896-)

1. *The Oxford Book of English Verse 1250-1918*. Chosen and edited by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Published by the Oxford University Press, London, England. 1943 edition. (Used by permission.)

INTRODUCTION

ONE principle factor prompting the preparation of this work has been the number of booklets and pamphlets circulating in the United States and Great Britain dealing with this subject, which, although well written, tend to skim the surface and often omit many of the major record sources.

Our colleagues and ourselves, when giving classes on research in England and Wales have been asked many times for a textbook which would do something more than skim the surface. First it was decided to write a book covering research in Great Britain, but this idea was abandoned when the extent was fully realized. It was then decided to confine the work to England and Wales, but it was soon realized that even this would extend to at least three volumes.

Behind this book is the accumulation of over thirty years experience, most of them spent in actually handling the records in England and Wales. The observations of others who have had experience in the same field have also been drawn upon. Examples from actual pedigrees have been used, which is proof enough that the records demonstrated are reputable sources.

There are fifty-two counties in England and Wales. Each is a study of its own, with local customs, dialects, and records peculiar to a neighborhood, each calling for specialization when a problem becomes intricate. It is to be hoped that qualified genealogists who specialize in their own locality will compile a record of their experiences and the knowledge they have gained in order to help those who have been unable to specialize. Undoubtedly there are records hidden away in obscure places that have to be brought to light so that no book on this particular subject can presume to cover every problem.

In many cases the information that is to be found in the genealogical sources of England and Wales leaves much to be desired. Records in some countries are far superior, but there are others with records which are much inferior. It is little short of a miracle that so many records are still available. We decided to describe first of all the principal genealogical sources applicable to the period from 1538 to the present

time (1956), because these are the years usually covered by researchers. The year 1538 marks the introduction of the law governing the keeping of parish registers and the records prior to that time are a study of their own. The majority of pedigrees, for lack of evidence, wallow in uncertainty long before that time. Indeed, anyone successfully proving a pedigree back to 1538, especially of a middle class or laboring family, should be very grateful.

It is true that, because of a lack of knowledge of the right sources, many give up the search too soon, thinking that nothing more can be done. It is also true that in some cases nothing more can be done, sometimes because the record of the connecting event cannot be traced or else cannot be fully identified and separated from other possibilities.

There are many pitfalls in constructing an accurate and complete pedigree. The records of the working folk are often obscure, and many of the pedigrees of the "gentle" families contain errors, some quite unintentional. It is dangerous to accept conjectures too readily before all available sources have been searched and analyzed. If a theory becomes fixed in the mind, it soon becomes easy to accept it even though proof may be lacking. One should not be anxious to trace a pedigree back to "noble" ancestry just so that he has reason to boast. If it were possible to trace all the links of the ancestral chain, everyone would find a relationship to nobility. It is more honorable to trace ancestral lines slowly and correctly, perhaps through yeomen, shoemakers, and laborers, than it is to stretch the imagination and "hook on" to some well-known family of the same surname.

As the research proceeds, every effort should be made to find the complete family in each generation. In haste to extend pedigrees back to as early a date as possible, many sometimes fail to do this. It is not sufficient only to know dates of birth or christening, and marriage of the parents and children, but also reasonable efforts should be made to trace the death or burial of every member of each family. The family is recognized as the important unit in life, and a genealogy which shows only parts of families in each generation is a partial genealogy, at best only half done.

It is important to remember that the statements made in this work refer to genealogical research in England and Wales *only* and should not be construed as relating to Scot-

land or Ireland, where customs and record-keeping are somewhat different.

Later volumes will deal with additional subjects, such as probate, military, and apprenticeship records; a description of the 52 counties of England and Wales together with details of the disposition of the records of each county; some difficulties in Welsh research; helpful hints in determining ancestry, and many other subjects important to the genealogist.

If the reader stumbles here and there as he studies these chapters, he should remember that books can assist a teacher but they cannot do his work. The authors hope that since this is the first attempt by anyone to describe adequately the application of certain genealogical record sources, that it will become a useful and valuable guide.

The authors express grateful acknowledgement to Archibald F. Bennett, general secretary of the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for his encouragement; to L. Garrett Myers, superintendent of the Society for his awareness of the many difficulties involved in compiling complete and correct family groups; to Henry E. Christiansen, superintendent of the Research Department at the Society for helpful suggestions; to Brian M. Leese, for reading the manuscript, for helpful suggestions and for the chapter, "The Jews in Great Britain and the Commonwealth," to Mariel P. Gardner, for her fine illustrations; also to the Deputy Keeper, Public Record Office, London, for kind permission to reproduce pages from the 1851 Census of England and Wales.



PLATE I. Farnham, Surrey: Still unspoiled by industry.

PLATE II. Ebbw Vale, part of Monmouthshire: The center of this county's coal mining area.

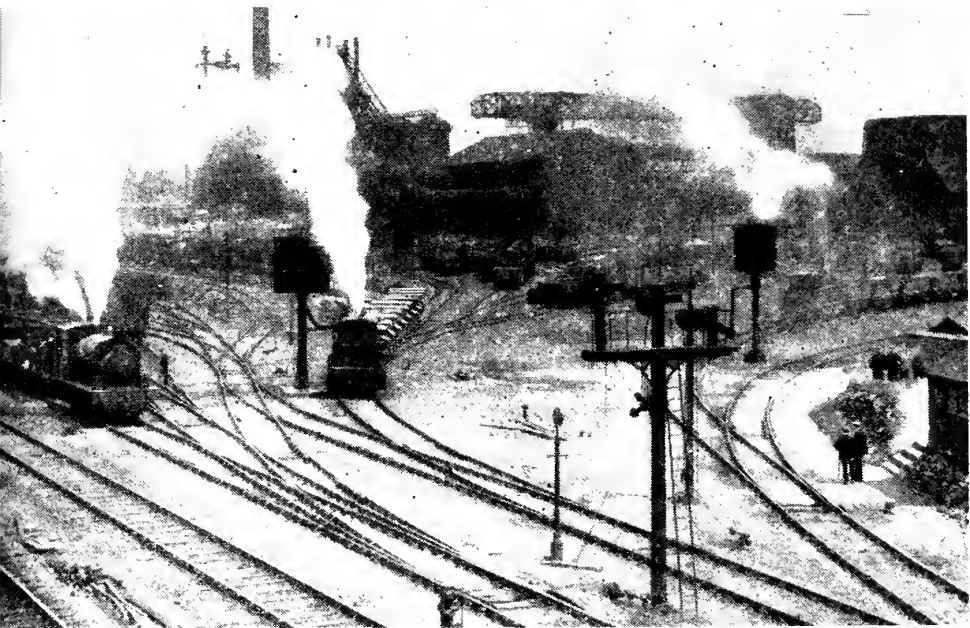


PLATE III. Kersey, Suffolk: Once famous for the manufacture of fabrics, but now a sleepy village, known for its beauty.

PLATE IV. Corby, Northamptonshire: Once a small country village, with a population in 1851 of about 850. Now transformed into a flourishing industrial center on the development of iron-stone mining. Population in 1950 of 11,500.

Chapter One

BRIEF HISTORIC AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

THE history of the people of England and Wales is the history of the struggles, sorrows, defeats, and victories of one's ancestors, whether or not they are known by name to historians. The economic, social, political, and religious background of England and Wales and the effect it had upon the lives of his ancestors is an intriguing story, that can receive but brief mention here. Everyone who is engaged in genealogical research is urged to make a study of the history of the people from whom he descended, for to have an understanding of the conditions existing at a particular period will help one to visualize an ancestor as a real person and not merely as a name identified by a date, place, and relationship.

When studying a pedigree extending back to around the time of the injunction given to the clergy to keep parish registers (1538), great stories can be conjured in the mind about the religious and political struggles then existent. Those who would not bow to the will of Henry VIII were crushed, and outbreaks of insurrection led to ruthless punishment. One can picture the rebellion, capture, and imprisonment of an ancestor, of his dying of fever or starvation or being led to Tyburn (London) and there hung upon a scaffold.

What part did one's ancestors take in the great struggle between the Royalists and the Roundheads in the troubled times of the 1640's which led to the temporary abolition of the monarchy and the creation of a Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell? Perhaps an ancestor was among the few who voyaged in 1497 with John and Sebastian Cabot and explored the eastern coasts of North America, or, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I perhaps his love of adventure took him with Sir Francis Drake to the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

Ancestors might have been among those who became famous, such as the *Pilgrim Fathers* who in 1620 sailed on the *Mayflower* and founded New England; or in 1607 under

the leadership of Captain John Smith founded Jamestown, Virginia, or as English Catholics, first colonized Maryland in 1634. Colonies were later founded in North and South Carolina, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Georgia. In 1682 William Penn, at the head of a colony of Quakers, founded Pennsylvania.

Meanwhile back in England other ancestors were advancing the freedom of the people, and one might wonder how they felt when the censorship and licensing of the printing press ceased and the *Habeas Corpus Act* added a new security for their personal freedom.

How many of our ancestors were refugees, who about 1685, fled from France, and among whom were the founders of the silk industry in Spitalfields, London? What part did our forefathers play in the Revolution of 1688 which changed the Catholic monarchy to that of a Protestant?

Was the courage of our ancestors tried when nearly 100,000 Londoners died of the plague? Did they feel as did Samuel Pepys who wrote in his diary in 1666:

Home, finding the town keeping the day solemnly . . . I presently [went] into the church. This is the first time I have been in the church since I left London for the plague, and it frightened me indeed to go through the church more than I thought it could have done, to see so many graves lie so high upon the churchyards, where people have been buried of the plague. I was much troubled at it, and do not think to go through it again a good while.¹

In 1702 the British seized Gibraltar, and secured a position to defend its overseas trade routes; then in 1707 a union was effected between England and Scotland, thus forming the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Did our ancestors foresee in these events the stepping stones for the building of the British Empire? When Charles Edward Stuart ("Bonnie Prince Charlie") attempted to seize the throne in 1745, were our ancestors on hand to defend the country or to side with the Scottish pretender?

In the 1750s the French attempted to throw the British out of India, and Robert Clive organized a reprisal which was successful and laid the foundation for the inclusion of India as part of the British Empire. Suppose that our ancestors were

1. *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 1660-1669 (First published 1825).



PLATE I. "Battle of Plassey, West Bengal, India, 1757."

with Clive when, at the Battle of Plassey in 1757, a small British force was victorious against odds of 18 to 1.

Did your ancestor know Captain James Cook, born in Marton-in-Cleveland, East Yorkshire in 1728, "the son of an agricultural labourer,"² who became one of England's greatest navigators and in 1777 discovered the Hawaiian Islands. Was an ancestor with General Wolfe in 1760 when, by an ingenious plan, Canada was secured for the British, or was he with General George Washington when the French were defeated at Fort Duquesne and that place renamed *Pittsburg* in honor of the great English Statesman, William Pitt? When in the American Declaration of Independence, published 4th July 1776, there were statements of some of the basic principles of good government and that the colonies

2. *Dictionary of National Biography*, XII (London:1887) p. 66.

were separating from Great Britain, did any of our ancestors cry, like Lord Chatham (William Pitt), "You cannot conquer America. If I were an American as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms!"

Great Britain was the mother of many great nations, first-ly in America, which became the United States. Soon the British began to stream across the oceans into Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, taking with them their language and the freedoms which they had won.

Was your ancestor, like John Milton, the son of a scrivener,³ able to afford an education at Cambridge University, or was he like John Bunyan, the son of a tinker⁴ who never went to school, but learned reading and writing in his father's home, enlisted in the army at sixteen, married at twenty, and though poor and delighting in dancing, sports, and merry-making, later became deeply religious? An ancestor might be the son of a well-to-do squire, shopkeeper, a master craftsman, a yeoman farmer, a farm laborer, coal miner, or some other artisan. He might be an orphan left to the mercy of neighbors. He might have attended a village school, a grammar school, or a university. If his father was wealthy enough, a premium might have been paid in order to apprentice him to a trade, or if he were a poor child, he might have been conveniently disposed of by apprenticing him in a distant town. There were many who were never taught to read, and knew little of religion and the refinements of life. Others, in all classes of society, whether living in a mansion or forced to live in poverty, used all of their powers to live exemplary lives, and taught their children the principles of common morality and obligations with regard to society.

In times of scarcity, the laborer on the farm or in the town, struggled to live amidst appalling poverty, but in times of prosperity, his life was made easier and was probably more colorful. The laborer's cottage was rough and ready, with practically no windows, and certainly in ancient times, without any glass. The yeomen farmers and the town tradesmen and merchants lived in houses of timber, brick, and stone,

3. A scrivener was a professional or public writer of legal documents.

4. A tinker was a maker and mender of pots and pans. J. Brown in his biography of John Bunyan states his family "came not of the very squalid poor, but of people who, though humble in station, were yet decent and worthy in their ways." (*Ibid*, VII, p .275.)

making for domestic comfort and refinement. A forefather, living at the time of the Industrial Revolution might have been sent to work in a coal mine at the age of eight, and his future wife might have walked five miles — to work in a cotton mill for twelve hours — then walked home again! Whether an ancestor was rich or poor, educated or unschooled, hardworking artisans or indolent idlers, courtiers or diplomats, of a family of the landed gentry or scions of the titled aristocracy, it was up to him to view life's panorama as it unfolded before him — and for us to accept him in the role that he played.

*Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
Shall bear the gree^s and a' that;
For a' that, and a' that,
It's comin' yet for a' that,
That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brithers be for a' that.*

—Robert Burns

In bygone times, England was an agricultural country, with trade centering in a few large towns. But during the Eighteenth Century, a series of mechanical inventions led to the great advance in manufacturing. This period is called the Industrial Revolution. This, coupled with the rapid development of overseas markets, caused a shift of the population. Between 1770 and 1831 Liverpool multiplied its population five times; Manchester rose from 41,000 in 1774 to 270,000 in 1831, Birmingham more than doubled its population, and Bristol became prosperous with its trade with the West Indies. Between 1800 and 1850, the population of England and Wales rose from 9,000,000 to 18,000,000. There was no legislation to control the vast industrial development, and there was great suffering on the part of the exploited working classes.

As far as many written records show, some families appear to have been untouched by the struggles around them, remaining in the same village or town, working at the same tasks as their forefathers. Even today representatives of the same family are sometimes found in the same locality engaged in the parallel occupations of their forebears. Usually

5. "take the prize."

little difficulty is experienced in tracing the pedigrees of such families.

Other families, influenced by economic changes and political disturbances, were forced to move around the villages of the immediate locality. The compilation of their pedigrees may involve searching the records of many parishes.

Pressure in the economic and political fields caused property owners to raise their rents, forcing tenants to leave the locality in an endeavor to secure a livelihood elsewhere. When they did wander far afield, their origins often become a problem and sometimes their pedigree cannot be traced. The amazing growth in industry with the invention of machines, improvement of the highways, and the broadening aspect of world-wide markets, encouraged many to leave their villages and take up employment in factories and workshops in the vastly-expanding towns. Attracted by the wages, they labored in the mines, in the construction of canals, roadways, and railroads; they found employment as clerks and administrators in business offices, commercial houses and banks; they went to sea as sailors in ships transporting goods around the world. They filled the need for a vast number of schoolteachers, professors, physicians and surgeons, and a host of other occupations required in a swiftly growing industrial nation. Added to all these, are the vast number who officered and manned the army and navy for the protection of the country and its far-flung spheres of political and commercial power.

These vast social changes, coupled with the increase in the population have constantly been the means of transferring families from one locality to the other, sometimes across the country, and impelling other hundreds of thousands to leave their mother-country to pioneer and populate vast regions across the oceans. Many of those who remained in England and Wales became the victims of the mushroom growth of industry. A sudden depression in trade was universally felt; poor business acumen by employers of labor would bankrupt business; coal, tin, and iron mines became exhausted or too dangerous to work; farmers suffered from poor crops and low prices; unhealthy housing conditions caused sickness and death. All these and many other causes kept the population shifting around considerably.

The tin miner from Cornwall sometimes will be found digging coal several hundred miles away in County Durham;

the Welsh coalminer might be found rearing his family in Lancashire; the clothworker from Wiltshire working in the woolen mills of Yorkshire; the carpet weaver from Somersetshire employed at the same trade in Worcestershire; the silk-weaver from London attracted to the new silk mills in Cheshire; the lacemaker from Nottingham working in an adjoining county; the shipwright from Kent building ships in Southampton; the engineer from Birmingham tending machines in Bristol; the builder and mason from Berkshire erecting structures in Surrey; the potter from Staffordshire making earthenware in Liverpool or perhaps in Yorkshire; the shoemaker from Northampton in a shoe factory in Leicester; the fisherman from Lowestoft, Suffolk, sailing out of Whitehaven, Cumberland; the mariner from London settled in Birkenhead, Cheshire; the Scotsman, the Irishman, and the foreigners from Continental Europe also finding employment far from his native village. They are but a few of the people engaged in thousands of occupations mainly in the manufacturing field, each needing its workers drawn from all parts of the country.

Chapter Two

FAMILY SOURCES, TRADITIONS, CORRESPONDENCE AND ADVERTISING IN NEWSPAPERS

I—The First Family Group Sheet:

IT is logical that the first step in genealogical research is the compiling of a family group record of one's own family. Mother, father, brothers, and sisters should be the first called upon to help make the record complete and accurate. Verbal statements are not always accurate, but these should be written down and then attempts made to verify them. Careful notes of every statement, no matter how trivial, may later fit into the family record.

When all possible information has been gleaned from the immediate family, a check should be made of the family papers. If the owners are willing, a full copy of all records should be made, so that in case of later doubt, the source of the information will be known.

Here is a brief description of some of the records that may be found in drawers, chests, cupboards and attics.

1. The *certificates of births, deaths and marriages*, especially those registered since 1 July 1837. An account of details found in these records is given in a later chapter.¹ Sometimes one may find short form certificates, where details are in brief, but these are a lead to additional facts in the original records.

2. *Family Bibles* vary in the amount of information they present. Some contain exact information on the immediate family, but others mention, in addition, such relatives as uncles, aunts, cousins, and persons who have married into the family. If it is known that a family Bible exists, untiring efforts should be made to locate it. Even if a family Bible is not known to exist, enquiries should still be made among relatives, in case one should be traced. When copying information from a family Bible, it is wise to consult the title

1. See Chapter 4 on *Civil Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages*.



COURTESY PIONEER PHOTO

Grandmother enters a birth into the Family Bible.

page and find the year in which the Bible was printed. If it was printed many years *after* the events recorded, then the records may not be as accurate or as authentic as if they had been written into the book as each event occurred.

3. *Memorial or funeral cards*, were very popular some years ago; many families have them. As they were printed at the time of the events, the dates and places of deaths and burials, and relationships are usually accurate.

4. *Old letters*, received from relatives as well as from friends, often mention important events in the family such as birth, marriage, and death, as well as events of importance in tracing relatives who have become temporarily lost. It is advisable to make genealogical abstracts from letters and also to consider having copies made by photography since handling and age will destroy old papers. Undated letters may still be in old envelopes with original postmarks on them, and a careful note of addresses should always be made.

5. *Old deeds* or proved and unproved *wills* may be traced in some families. These often mention members of the family, and in the case of deeds, of property possessed by the family and the location of the property.

6. *Church certificates* of baptism, marriage and burial may be traced, indicating membership in specified religious

denominations. They may also give the addresses of the churches or chapels, and thus not only help in giving relationships but also in leading to long forgotten and sometimes obscure places where important events had been recorded.

7. *Military and naval records* are often found in the home.² Records may be traced of those who died, as the result of wars or other conditions at home or overseas. Those who suffered disablement or became eligible for pension by years of service may have left their *Service Records* with the family. Sometimes a relative cannot be traced in *Service Records* of the government unless the *service* or *regimental* number is known — a number usually unobtainable unless the service papers are traceable. Photographs of military personnel are often helpful as it is sometimes possible to identify the regiment from the photograph itself.

8. *Apprenticeship indentures, and membership records* in some trade guild or organization may be found; these documents often lead to additional facts.

9. *Photograph albums and scrap-books, collections of newspaper clippings, diaries, journals, and biographies*, all should be read through for mention of persons and dates connected with the family.

Here is a check-list, so that the sources used may be checked as the work proceeds:

Journals	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aunts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Military & Naval		Parents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service Records	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family Bibles	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oldest Members of		Marriages	<input type="checkbox"/>
the Families	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photographs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grandparents (paternal)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wedding Announce-	
(maternal)	<input type="checkbox"/>	ments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Church Blessings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Biographies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certificates of Births	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brothers & Sisters	<input type="checkbox"/>
Old Letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uncles	<input type="checkbox"/>
Memorial Cards	<input type="checkbox"/>	Church memberships	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diaries	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deaths	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apprenticeships	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scrapbooks	<input type="checkbox"/>

All the records mentioned are important. It is always better to use more than one source of information if possible in building the records of the families on the pedigree.

2. A chapter dealing with Naval and Military Records is planned for a later volume.

Working with the known facts, and using them as a basis for working back into the unknown, the source material should always be carefully noted; stating the type of record used, where found, and the necessary identifying particulars, such as volume and page number. When information is obtained from tradition or from memory, it is necessary to verify this information in original records.

II—Gathering Records by Correspondence

The next logical step in the compilation of family group records is the tracing of grandparents, uncles, aunts, grand-uncles, and grand-aunts. This will mean contacting members of each of these related families who may be able to give information and perhaps will be willing to search in their homes for those types of records already mentioned as *home* sources. Often these closely related families are neglected by compilers of genealogies. We must not forget that we should complete the family record of *all* our relatives in each generation.

In cases where the exact dates are not remembered, encourage the relatives to recall other incidents occurring about the same time. For instance, a grand-aunt may not know when her cousin Mary's son, Thomas, was born, but she does recall that he was born when her daughter, Mildred, had been married six years. With a little more effort, the marriage date of Mildred may be traced or closely approximated, thus giving a direct clue to the year in which Thomas was born.

Nicknames are commonly used in many families, some of them bearing no resemblance to the actual given name. Therefore very great care must be taken that the correct name is recorded to ensure that the person is not recorded twice in the same family.

Relatives who live at a distance or overseas must, of course, be contacted by correspondence. Letter writing is easy if the writer explains briefly yet clearly what is required. Long rambling letters generally do not bring good results. Letter writers should introduce themselves to their correspondents, who may, in turn, be interested in the same branch of the family.

Many people abhor form-filling, and it is sometimes not advisable to enclose printed family group records. A good method to obtain quick and helpful replies is to send a sheet

of writing paper for each family group record you may be trying to complete, upon which may be written as much information as you know, together with a note requesting corrections and additions to the sheets. As an alternative, the enclosure of a short questionnaire concerning points raised in the letter may bring a favorable reply.

Should the movements of the related families within the British Isles or overseas have been numerous, contact with relatives whose present whereabouts are unknown may be made through the columns of the newspapers. Certain national Sunday newspapers have facilities for such notices. If the enquiry can be confined to a certain locality, a local newspaper editor may insert a letter as a news item.

The publication *The Newspaper Press Directory*,³ which is to be found in most public libraries or newspaper offices, lists over 1,550 newspapers circulating in the British Isles and will give the name and address of the daily or weekly papers covering the localities concerned. In addition, there are brief listings of newspapers published in the principal cities throughout the British Commonwealth of Nations. Never presume upon the good will of editors; always make a courteous request and enclose sufficient money to cover a reply by mail.

Delay in the attempt to contact known and unknown relatives may be disastrous. Elderly people have failing memories and the information may be forgotten or even lost; members of the older generation who might supply valuable information should be contacted early in the search.

III—Examples

It is wise to read the old journals or diaries left by relatives. If they are written in Welsh instead of English or if the ink is fading or the paper deteriorating, have them transcribed and have several copies made and bound. If they are in Welsh a good translation should be made. These old books often give excellent information on the compiler's close relatives who were living in the same generation. One may then follow through the details given by obtaining documentary evidence and then advertising in newspapers. Consider the following example taken from the research of Mrs. Richard

3. *The Newspaper Press Directory* (London: Benn Bros. Ltd., Fleet Street). Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, Library call number R12A74.

E. Folland and her brother, Rulon S. Howells. The diary of their grandfather, Thomas Howells, records many details of importance, written during his visit to Wales in 1870. Here is one item which was followed to great advantage:

"12 June 1870. At Aberdare (Glamorganshire). Visited my Brother Jenkin Howell, he is a printer by trade and has a good many workmen to assist him. He has a wife and four children."

It will be noted that the name of the wife and the names of the children are not given. In another family record, made around 1920, appears a note that Jenkin Howell died about June 1900. Is it possible to trace the name of the wife and the children, contact living descendants and discover what they may know about the ancestry? If so, one may also discover the full details concerning all the descendants of the brothers and sisters of Thomas Howell. The first thing noticeable in the quotation from the diary, is that Jenkin Howell of Aberdare was a printer who employed many workmen.

A letter was sent to the chief librarian, Public Library, Aberdare, Glamorganshire, South Wales, asking for information, stating that grandfather's brother was Jenkin Howell, a local printer who died about 1900. Briefly mentioned in this letter were details that the grandfather, Thomas Howell, was born in 1831 in Penderyn, Breconshire, son of John Howell who had married Gwenllian Price in 1827. The letter mentioned that the old diary contained names of places where relatives had resided, such as Torfoel, Rhiwl, Wernlaes, and others. As the request required some enquiry on the part of the librarian, a remittance (\$2.25) was sent. In reply, the librarian identified the places mentioned in the diary and sent a map of the district. The librarian found that Jenkin Howell, the printer, (brother of Thomas Howell) died 14 June 1902 aged 65 years; however, the librarian had been unable to trace living relatives. He mentioned that the place *Rhiwl* was probably a corruption of the Welsh name *Yr Heol*, meaning "The Road," and the publication *History of Penderyn Parish* mentioned the Howell family and described Thomas Howell's mother (whose name before marriage was Gwenllian Price) as "*un o 'Brysiad yr Heol' oedd ei fam*" which means that the family was known as the "*Price's of the Road.*" *Heol Las*, the farm where the ancestral Price family had resided, was marked on the map received from the librarian. The book,

History of Penderyn Parish, which is written in the Welsh language, is out of print. The booksellers contacted by the researcher were unable to obtain a copy. It was next necessary to take other action to further identify the family of Jenkin Howell the printer. Application was made to the Registrar General,⁴ Somerset House, London, for the death record of Jenkin Howell in 1902 and for a search in the 1901 census returns. This resulted in obtaining both records, the 1901 census⁵ giving the following information:

1901 Census of 16 Victoria Square, Aberdare

Head	Jenkin	Howell	marr.	64	born	Penderyn,	Brecons.
Wife	Rachel	Howell	do	55	"	Aberdare,	Glamorgan.
son	Jenkin	Howell	single	20	"	do	do
dau	Amelia	Howell	do	19	"	do	do
son	David Rees	Howell	do	15	"	do	do

With this information there was now something worth while to work from. It is often valueless to request information through the newspaper columns unless one can give some facts which the readers of newspapers are able to recognize as concerning themselves. This is doubly true when one deals with such common surnames as Smith, Jones, Williams, and Brown.

The publication *The Newspaper Press Directory*,⁶ was then checked and in the index, Aberdare was listed. If the place had not been listed, it would have been necessary to check the map of the locality in order to find the name of the nearest town listed in the directory. Aberdare was listed as having two newspapers. The *Aberdare Leader* was chosen because the description of the newspaper fitted the requirements. It carried the "local" news and thus had a better chance of being read by relatives rather than a newspaper which carried politics, religion, sports, or mostly national news. A concise letter was sent to "The Editor, *The Aberdare Leader*, Aberdare, Glamorganshire." This briefly stated: "Grandfather Thomas Howell was born 1831 in Penderyn, Breconshire, the son of John Howell, of Wernlaes by his wife, Gwenllian Price, formerly of Ynysmudw. Thomas Howell left Aberdare in 1850 for America, but in 1870 returned to

4. The Registrar General, General Register Office, Somerset House, Strand, London, W.C. 2, England. See Chapter 4 on Civil Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

5. See Chapter 6 on The Census Records of England and Wales.

6. *The Newspaper Press Directory*, *op. cit.*

his native land and visited kinsfolk. Among the many relatives mentioned in his diary were members of his brother's family. As far as is known these consisted of: Jenkin Howell, born 1836 in Penderyn, a bookbinder and printer of Victoria Square, Aberdare, who died there 14 June 1902; Rachel, his wife, and their children named Jenkin Howell, born 1881, Amelia Howell born 1882, and David Rees Howell born 1886. The family had also been connected with Heol-Las farm." In this letter was a request: "If you are able to enter this letter in your news columns, it would be a very kind gesture." One dollar was enclosed to cover a reply and a copy of the newspaper, with an offer to pay if the charge exceeded this.

The response was gratifying. A number of persons replied stating that they had read with interest the newspaper announcement, and that they were related to the family of Jenkin Howell the printer. Some of the correspondents were even his grandchildren. They willingly sent information on the Howell family and details on the whereabouts of various other members of the family. In addition, a distant cousin of the family, living in London (over 170 miles away) also saw the newspaper announcement.

He was Captain D. D. Jones, formerly of the British Army. He was descended from William Jones who had a sister Gwenllian. This Gwenllian married Jenkin Howell of Wernlaes. They had a son named John Howell born 1793 who was the father of Jenkin Howell the printer, and of Thomas Howell, who emigrated to America in 1850. Captain D. D. Jones in his letters, proceeded to show the ancestry for several generations on the Jones and Howell lines. He explained that he, Daniel David Jones, was born in 1876 but that his father, David Jones, who was born in 1817 had not married until he was aged 52 years. To quote his words: "As the last survivor of my generation, I can, naturally, supply more information than probably any other person living about your relatives, and it has been a real pleasure to try and help you."

Within a year after the information was received from Captain Jones, a letter was received from his family in London telling of his death on the 13 September 1952. His kind letters will be treasured by the American branch of the family, who are happy that they were able to contact their kinsman before he died. In addition, the cooperation of those who

wrote letters in response to the newspaper article (and there were many) together with the kind help of the librarian at Aberdare will always be remembered. Eventually one of the relatives in Wales was able to obtain a copy of the book, *History of the Parish of Penderyn*, which is written in Welsh and named *Hanes Plwyf Penderyn*.⁷ The references to the family in the book were considerable and helped bridge many difficult gaps in the genealogical record.

To demonstrate the value of old letters, which opened up the research problem when all other sources had failed, note the following interesting example:

All that was known concerning Sarah Driver was that she was born in London, 3 December 1828, daughter of William Driver and Elizabeth formerly Taylor. The records of the ship *International* showed that Sarah sailed from Liverpool on 28 February 1853 for New Orleans, Louisiana, at which time her address was given as 34 Westbourne Park Road, Paddington, London.⁸ She married in the United States, but her record of marriage gives no clue as to her birthplace in the London area. As there are in the London localities several hundred parishes, each with separate registers, it seemed a hopeless task to trace her birth. As she was born prior to 1837, when Civil Registration of births began, her birth would not be listed in the office of the Registrar General. A special marriage index of certain marriages which took place in London areas was searched. This disclosed that a William Driver married an Elizabeth Taylor in 1825 at the Church of Saint Mary, Whitechapel (London). A search of the registers of this parish failed to indicate any children following the marriage of 1825. No information was found in the 1841 and 1851 census of a wide area in and around Whitechapel, London. An attempt was also made to trace the deaths of William Driver and his wife, Elizabeth. This was done by means of the indexes to records of deaths at the General Registrar office,⁹ but without any result, since practically nothing was known which would identify these persons, even if any likely entries could be traced.

7. David Davies, *Hanes Plwyf Penderyn (History of Penderyn Parish)*, Breconshire (Aberdare, 1924).

8. Based on the Emigration Records, formerly kept by the L.D.S. Church in Liverpool, England, but now in the possession of the Library of the L.D.S. Church Historian, Salt Lake City, Utah. They commence in the year 1849.

9. The Registrar General, *op. cit.*



PLATE I.

William Driver of London, 1783-1871.

8.12.1871. I.
 10.12.1871. Green Lane.
 10.12.1871. St. John's Church.
 10.12.1871. St. John's Church.

Dear Aunt

I have a new sister whose name
 is Emily Honore and we
 have in her a very fine
 with long eyes but we have
 much other excepting from
 grandfather and I am sorry

to tell you he died on 18th Dec.
 I cannot see any more but
 but now loss he did not
 he was but died on his
 18th and was buried at
 St. John's cemetery & St. John's
 the 18th of December grandfather

From your affectionate
 nephew

Arthur J. Ramsey.

Feb 2nd 1872.

PLATE II. Portions of old letter from London, dated 1872, announcing death of William Driver.

The granddaughter of Sarah Driver made considerable enquiry among her relatives. This resulted in tracing a small bundle of letters in the custody of a relative living in Florida. These letters were written by Eliza, wife of James John Ramsey, and her son, Arthur J. Ramsey. Mrs. Ramsey was the former Eliza Driver, a sister of Sarah Driver. The address on the letters was Aden Grove, Stoke Newington, London. The letters concerned such family information as the names and ages of the children of Mrs. Eliza Ramsey, and the death of "grandfather" the William Driver who married in 1825. The postmarks on the envelopes showed that they had been mailed in London between 1871 and 1875. (See *PLATE I* and *PLATE II*.)

The oldest child mentioned in the letters was Arthur James Ramsey; he was born in 1861. A birth certificate of this child was obtained that showed the family resided at the time of his birth, 23 May 1861, at 168 City Road, Saint Lukes (London), and the marriage of the parents, James John Ramsey and Eliza Driver, was traced. It revealed that they married 10 May 1860 in the Providence Baptist Chapel, Austen Street, Bethnal Green, (London). The groom's residence was at that date 43 York Street, Saint Lukes, and the bride's address was 40 King's Square, Saint Lukes. A search of the 1861 census of City Road failed to reveal the family, but the 1861 census of King's Square, City Road, Saint Lukes, showed the following:

Head—John Ramsey, married, age 31, warehouseman, born
Norton Folgate, Middx.

wife—Eliza Ramsey, wife, age 26, born City of London.

As the City of London itself has over seventy parish churches, and as the marriage of 1860 took place in a chapel of the Baptist denomination, the problem remained difficult. However, the old letters mention a brother, William Driver, and his wife, Sarah, and one of their children, Phillip William Driver, born in 1862. A birth certificate was obtained for the child, Phillip William Driver, and the marriage facts of the parents were found. The marriage took place on 8 January 1861 at Salters Hall Baptist Chapel, City of London, and William Driver was then resident at 20 Peters Hill, Doctors Commons, City of London. The 1861 census record of that address revealed the ancestors as follows:

Head—William Driver, married, age 77 years, born Chelsea, Middx.

wife—Elizabeth Driver, married, age 66 years, born Purleigh, Essex.

A search was made in Purleigh, Essex, which resulted in establishing the christening of Mrs. Elizabeth Driver who was Elizabeth Taylor, but a search in the registers of Chelsea failed to reveal the christening of William Driver. It was decided to search the 1851 census of the locality of the City of London, and the family was traced therein at 14 George Court, parish of St. Benet, Paul's Wharf, as follows:

Head	William Driver	age	67	born Chertsey Surrey
wife	Elizabeth do	"	57	born Purleigh, Essex
son	William do	"	15	born London

With the new information that William Driver was born in Chertsey, Surrey, searches were conducted in the registers of that parish.

In order that one may gauge the value of these old letters, it would be well to note that prior to their discovery, research had been conducted in England which had cost about Twenty-one Pounds Sterling (\$60.00), all to no advantage. After the old letters had been traced and the details noted, research was continued. Later research resulted in finding something new and valuable to the pedigree and finally to the building up of true and correct records of each family group.

IV—Traditions

All families have traditional stories regarding their antecedents. Some of these stories relate to "money in Chancery" or connections with the nobility and royalty. All traditions should always be kept in mind, but not accepted as authentic until the true facts have been traced through *normal research channels*. It is a mistake to begin research work by trying to add to the tradition. Usually, normal research sources will either support or disprove traditions; in all cases searches should begin with the known and proven, then work to the unknown and unproven. Some traditions are true, but many are the result of boasts by older members of the family. Often these stories in due course have become ac-

cepted facts. Some families have a desire to connect with noblemen and gentlemen, not necessarily because it may then be easier to trace an ancestral line, but more from a false pride. The important thing is to secure a correct record of true ancestry, whether the ancestors were of "noble" blood or were common folk.

Chapter Three

CEMETERIES, BURIAL GROUNDS AND CHURCHYARDS

LET us first consider modern cemeteries, burial grounds, and churchyards, because as the years pass, the value of their records increases in importance. Many families commencing their research need to use these as a principal source of information that leads to the completion of their family groups and to obtaining supplementary clues for continued research.

In 1853 an Act of Parliament relating to England and Wales permitted towns to purchase or set aside land for cemeteries. This led many cities and boroughs to open new cemeteries after 1853, as the yards surrounding churches and chapels became full. In addition to those provided for in the Act of 1853, there have been cemeteries opened by private companies prior to and since that time.

Generally, these modern cemeteries keep excellently indexed records of the interments, and some maintain grave lot registers wherein are listed all persons buried in a parti-



IN
LOVING
REMEMBRANCE OF

SAMUEL BROWN

DIED SEPT. 19 1722.

AS YOU ARE NOW, I ONCE WAS,
AS I AM NOW, YOU SOON WILL BE,
LET HEAVEN BE YOUR CONSTANT GOAL,
PREPARE YOURSELVES TO FOLLOW ME.



cular grave plot. This may be a family grave, thus providing helpful details in the compiling of the family record. As reference may be given to the grave lot number, it is a simple matter to visit the grave and find if a memorial stone records additional facts concerning the family. Reference to grave lot numbers in the office of the superintendent of the cemetery is essential because in large cemeteries one could spend a whole day looking for a tombstone — often in such circumstances this is a hopeless task. The cemetery burial register may record the complete details of those buried in a grave lot, but it will not include such additional details as may be on the tombstone, recording persons who died in another part of the country or overseas.

Even though many towns have these modern cemeteries, this does not mean that the various churches do not have burial grounds still in use. Where a parish church may have sufficient land to continue burials, or where the existence of a burial ground is not a health hazard, burials still take place in the parish churchyards. Similarly many of the Non-conformists, Roman Catholics, Society of Friends (Quakers), and Jews still maintain burial grounds. Some are adjacent to places of worship and others are at a different location. In large towns and cities, where more than one burial ground exists, enquiry as to the correct cemetery in which the burial took place is important. Information to be gained from cemeteries can prove very useful by giving dates and places of death that will lead to obtaining certified records of births, marriages, and deaths. These records also give street addresses for additional searches in census records. A family grave may show details of other relatives whose record was not previously known.

In large towns and cities where the correct cemetery or churchyard is unknown, a difficult problem arises. Certificates of deaths in England and Wales do not show the places of burial. Where cemeteries are under the control of the town or city, a copy of the records of the various cemeteries is usually kept at the town hall or municipal offices. Sometimes a visit or a letter to the town clerk may help. This may necessitate a search in the records of several cemeteries and could take considerable time; the local authorities may not have the staff available. It must also be understood that although various towns and cities have control of ceme-

teries, that does not always mean that these local authorities have the records for those burial grounds in their town that are not under their jurisdiction, such as the parish churchyards and other private and denominational burial grounds.

The following example illustrates how a family grave was traced in the modern cemetery records of the large city of Liverpool, Lancashire. This is taken from the case relating to the family of Thomas L. Obray. He was born in 1821 in Pembroke, Wales, and went to America in 1885 where he died in 1899. Among the records he left was the name of his sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Watkins, wife of Alfred Watkins. She was born in 1820 in Pembroke, but after her marriage she went to reside in Liverpool, England, more than 250 miles away from her birthplace. Her death was stated to have taken place in 1891 in the vicinity of Liverpool. Application to the Registrar General, Somerset House, London, traced the death record as follows:

Registration District West Derby

Death in the sub district of Walton, Counties Bootle and Lancaster

Died 7 March 1892 at 66 Winslow Street, Walton.

Elizabeth Watkins aged 74 years, wife of Alfred Watkins a journeyman joiner. Informant A. Watkins, same address.

Then the 1891 census was requested from the Registrar General, and the information received as follows:

Head—William A. Watkins, married, age 41, Joiner, born Liverpool.

Mother—Elizabeth Watkins, married, age 73, born Pembroke Dock.

Sister—Eleanor Herschman, married, age 35, born Liverpool.

Niece—Lizzie Herschman, age 1, born Liverpool.

If a family grave and tombstone existed, in which of the many cemeteries belonging to Liverpool would the record be? A letter was written to the town clerk, Municipal Buildings, Liverpool, stating that Mrs. Elizabeth Watkins died at Winslow Street, Walton, West Derby (a suburb of Liverpool) and explaining that she was the sister of Thomas L. Obray and closely related to the family making the enquiry. A reply was received from the town clerk. He pointed out that the records of several cemeteries in the north-end of the city had been searched and that the records of the Kirkdale

was placed in the newspaper circulating in Walton, Liverpool; this resulted in contacting close relatives of those mentioned, and these relatives were able to supply many details of the family group record and descent of this branch of the family.

Sometimes the local authorities may be unable to trace the burial of an individual from the facts given. The deceased and the family may not have been buried in one of their cemeteries. In these cases, it is wise to search the obituaries appearing in the local newspapers for some days following the date of death. This may result in tracing an announcement of the funeral to be held at a certain church or cemetery, thus leading to the burial record and possibly a family grave lot and tombstone.

According to his death record Ernest Alfred Hammond died 2 November 1939 in Liverpool, but the grave of his family was not found until his obituary in the Liverpool newspapers had been read. This stated that the funeral was to take place at the parish church of St. Mary, Walton-on-the-Hill, and the interment in the adjoining churchyard. This information resulted in finding the grave of the family, and the tombstone revealed important facts.

Not every enquiry is successful, of course, and sometimes a town does not own any of the cemeteries. Once a letter was sent to the town clerk at the Guildhall, City of York, for information on the burial of Robert Leake who died in 1919. It resulted in the letter's being passed on to the manager of the York Cemetery Company (a private company). The burial was traced in this private cemetery, stating that Robert Leake died 8 Feb. 1919 aged 77 years, but that he was interred in a common or public grave and that there was no tombstone. An explanation was given that a "common or public grave" is one in which six or seven unrelated persons were buried because the family did not purchase a private or family lot.

Consideration should always be given to the older churchyards and burial grounds connected with parish churches and the Nonconformist chapels. Although searches may have been made in the registers of christenings, burials, and marriages, important facts may still be gleaned from old tombstones, many of which are becoming more illegible each year. Some people have the erroneous idea that there is

no need to check for a tombstone when the registers of burials are available and have been searched. Generally there is little to be found in the burial entries and if a tombstone does exist, additional information thereon may save considerable trouble in identification. Note the following burial entries and tombstone inscriptions and compare them:

Parish Registers of Silkstone, Yorkshire

bur.—Mary wife of Joseph Caldwell of Cheesebottom, 11 Feb. 1797.

bur.—John Womersley of Coates, 30 June 1801.

bur.—Ann wife of John Womersley, 22 Apr. 1807.

bur.—John Womersley, 16 Dec. 1815, age 54.

These four burial entries are entered in the original registers as isolated events, and do not appear together. Note how the following quotation from the tombstone inscription brings the four isolated entries together and gives additional facts such as ages, relationship, and residence.

Tombstone in Silkstone Churchyard

Mary wife of Joseph Couldwell of Cheesebottom
and daughter of John Womersley of Coates,
died 7 Feb. 1797 aged 33

John Womersley died 27 June 1801 aged 66

Ann wife of John Womersley died

22 April 1807 aged 69

John Womersley their son died

16 December 1815 aged 54.

The value of such a tombstone inscription is obvious. Not all stones give such details, but there are many stones that do provide needed clues, such as ages, relationships, and residences, so helpful in making correct genealogical connections. Many of the inscriptions on tombstones and monuments, both inside the churches and in the burial grounds, have been copied and are to be found in manuscripts and printed books in libraries. Some libraries do not catalogue them under the name of the individual parish, especially when such inscriptions are contained in volumes of printed parishes registers, histories of counties and parishes, and in publications of various societies dealing with archeological and historical investigations.

Where the tombstones of a churchyard have not been copied, the minister of the church or chapel may, upon proper

application and re-imbursement, find some person locally who will examine the tombstones in the churchyard. It is also wise to consider the season of the year. Sometimes the spring and early summer is the best time to search a churchyard, after the snow and frost of winter have left and before the grass and undergrowth has become thick and difficult to remove from old stones. The legibility of tombstones varies according to locality. Local stone was usually used, some of hard and others of softer nature. Quite often the position of the tombstone in the churchyard affects its preservation, some being protected by layers of moss, or sheltered near walls, buildings, or trees.

The importance of tombstone inscriptions and their use in supporting the evidence of ancestry, cannot be stressed too strongly. For example, the 1851 census records, which may have disclosed a birthplace, were too late to be of help, but the tombstone supplied the birthplace instead:

Cartmel Priory Churchyard, North Lancashire

Mary wife of John Fearenside of Lancaster and daughter of George Brockbank, Esq., late of Fidler Hall, died 15 October 1825 aged 49 years.
above John Fearenside, born at Grain House near Giggleswick, October 1774 and died at Lancaster, 17 June 1850 aged 75 years.

The absence of burial entries for persons born in the parish sometimes makes a record very difficult to determine, and a tombstone may solve the problem and indicate the fate of some members of the family. Note this tombstone inscription from the sea-coast parish of Cartmel, Lancashire:

William Barrow late of Abbot Hall, Gentlemen,
died 7 May 1784 aged 66th year
Ann wife of William Barrow, d 8 May 1789, 57th year.
Those of their children
Will. Barrow, died 1764 age 7th year
Thomas Barrow, mariner, d 1771 age 18th year
Alice Barrow, died 14 Feb. 1788 age 18th year
William Spencer Barrow, mariner, died upon the
Coast of Guinea, in his 23rd year.
Robert Barrow, died in Norway 1795 in his 34th year.
Richard Barrow, mariner died at Lorrain in France,
in 1796 in his 28th year
Margaret Barrow, died 2 Nov. 1798 in her 40th year
Thomas Barrow, died 12 May 1835 aged 60 years.

Those who avoid searching burial records might never be able to compile a true pedigree, and those who overlook inscriptions upon monuments and tombstones may fall into great error in assuming connections, which, with a little more patience, may be unmistakeably clear.¹

1. See also Chapter 12, "How To Use Parish Registers."

Chapter Four

CIVIL REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS

On the 1st July 1837 the Government established *Civil Registration*, or the system of recording all births, deaths, and marriages in registers kept by the Registrar General of England and Wales at Somerset House, London W.C. 2. This system is also referred to as *Vital Records* and *Vital Statistics*. It has been a great boon to genealogists. At the time it was introduced, thousands of families were already members of many different Nonconformist churches and there were some people who did not affiliate with any church. For these and other reasons many births and deaths were not recorded in the parish registers of the Church of England. Too, some of the other denominations kept poor records or no records whatsoever.

To effect the new system, a Registrar General was appointed, and the country was divided into *regions*. These Regions were subdivided into *registration districts* which in turn were subdivided into *sub-districts*. In 1851 there were 623 such registration districts, each under the control of a *superintendent registrar* under whom there were other officials known as *registrars*.

Since 1st July 1837, at the birth of a child, someone knowing the facts (usually a close relative) has had to visit the local register office and report the facts of the event. When a person dies, a close relative or a neighbor, or occasionally the coroner, must register the event at the local register office. When a marriage takes place in a parish church of the Church of England, the clergyman is responsible to see that the event is properly recorded and that a copy of the entry in the register is forwarded to the local register office. When a marriage takes place in a church or chapel of some other denomination, similar measures are taken so that the local register office receives complete details. If a marriage takes place at the register office, the correct information is filed there.

It is possible that between 1837 and 1875 some persons failed to register births that took place, but it is believed that generally most births were registered. Without doubt some of the information registered is incorrect. Some of such wrong information may have been given unintentionally. Information thus registered at the local register office or in the marriage register of the Church of England is retained locally in the original registers. Copies of any of these entries may be obtained from the officials in charge. The records kept locally at the register office are indexed.

Since the 1st July 1837 the clergymen of the Church of England have kept their marriage registers in duplicate. When these duplicate registers are full, one is retained in the parish church and the other is deposited at the local register office. The local superintendent registrar then indexes the marriage register deposited with him, but until that register is sent to his office, he does not have a copy of the entries. In small parishes of the Church of England where marriages are infrequent, it may be many years until the book is filled and therefore the superintendent registrar may not be in possession of the record.

Every three months (at the end of each quarter of the year, March, June, September, and December) the local superintendent registrar transmits a copy of each registered birth, marriage and death to the *General Register Office* of the *Registrar General, Somerset House, London W.C. 2*. These returns include those copies of marriage entries transmitted to the local register office by the clergymen of the Church of England. At the General Register Office, London, these returns received from all parts of England and Wales are bound into volumes. An alphabetical list is made, indexing the events thus recorded. This index is arranged in volumes for each quarter of the year, and is an index for all of England and Wales covering that particular three-month period.

It should be noted that these indexes are based upon the *date of registration* of the event and *not* upon the date of the event. Thus any births or deaths which occurred in a certain quarter of the year, but were not registered until a later date, will not be listed in the indexes until the quarter in which they were registered.

For instance, if John Brown were born 30 Nov. 1877, but his birth was not registered until 10 Jan. 1878, his birth record would be found in the March quarter of 1878 instead of in the December quarter of 1877.

Those who intend to visit the office of the Registrar General, Somerset House, London, may well bear in mind information on the arrangement of the Indexes. Those who cannot attend personally should realize the difficulties entailed in making a search.

I—Arrangement of Indexes at Somerset House, London

The public is not permitted to see the volumes of registers of births, marriages and deaths. Upon the payment of a fee a person is permitted to search the indexes. It is stressed that these indexes are arranged in *strict alphabetical order* according to the *spelling* of the surname on the copy of the original record sent in to Somerset House by the local superintendent registrar. This is not necessarily always the same spelling as that sought by the applicant making the search. The recording frequently was entered the way the surname was pronounced at the time of registration, or how it was actually spelled by the registrar at that time. Local accent and dialect, the ability to spell of the person who registered the event, and the imagination of the person who recorded the event may all have to be taken into consideration. This is illustrated by the birth records of seven children of the same couple, who appear in the indexes under the spellings shown below, in the period of 1845 to 1858:—

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| i. Elizabeth Colsell,1845 | iv. Caroline Coleshill1850 |
| ii. Robert Samuel | v. Charlotte Colsell1852 |
| Cochell1847 | vi. William Coleshill1855 |
| iii. Sarah Eliza Colsell ..1848 | vii. Henry Coeshall1858 |

As the events are indexed strictly alphabetically, it can readily be appreciated that the variation *Coeshall* is many pages away from the spelling *Colsell*, as the large index covers all events that took place in all of England and Wales in the quarter concerned.

To gain an idea of the strenuous task involved in searching the indexes, note the following details. Prior to 1866 all the indexes are handwritten upon heavy parchment pages, bound into volumes approximately 18 inches by 12

inches and about 3 to 4 inches thick, weighing between 12 and 20 pounds. Thus if one should handle four volumes a year for a period covering five years, or twenty volumes, one would lift cumulatively over 400 pounds in weight. Below are illustrated the first two quarters of 1850, with a sketch (see PLATE I).

Volumes in March Quarter	Volumes in June Quarter
A to B	A to B
C to D	C to D
E to G	E to G
H	H
I to L	I to L
M to O	M to O
P to R	P to R
S	S
T to V	T to V
W to Z	W to Z

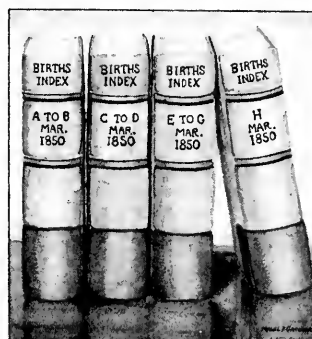


PLATE I. Sketch of the heavy parchment volumes of indexes at Somerset House.

Opening one of these index volumes to the first letter of the surnames required, one will find information similar to the following, taken from the birth indexes for December quarter of 1850:—

Name	Registration District	Volume	Page
AARON Bertha Agatha Marie	Holborn	II	185
AARON Isabella	Newington	IV	413
AARON Michael	Stepney	II	565
AARONS Rosa	Whitechapel	II	660
ABEA Roberta Arthur	Preston	XXI	676
ABBERLEY Elizabeth	Cheadle	XVII	40
ABBERLEY Male	Cheadle	XVII	40
ABBERLY Thomas	Gravesend	V	189
ABBESS James	Luton	VI	120
ABBETT Thomas John	I. of Wight	VIII	228

Because the public is not permitted to see the original registers, but only the indexes, all the information the applicant at Somerset House can see is the name of the person (who was born, married, or died) followed by the name of the registration district in which that event took place, then the reference to the volume and page number on which the actual entry is recorded. The name of the town or village in

which the event took place is not stated in the index, but only the name of the registration district in which that town or village is situated. If the applicant knows the name of the town, parish, or village in which the family or families usually resided, the official at Somerset House will check a reference book which lists the names of towns and the name of the registration districts can thus be obtained prior to checking the various indexes.

II—Searching the Vital Records.

Searches may be made either personally or by correspondence. At Somerset House the records for England and Wales are available by use of the Indexes. In the local register offices of the superintendent registrars, the records of the particular district covered by the register office are available. When any reference in the indexes is located, the officials in charge will inspect the entry and issue a certified copy. There is no such thing as an *uncertified* copy of any entry issuable by these officials. Search fees are based upon periods of five years in the records, the minimum fee payable covering a five-year search. Provision is also made, upon payment of a special *general search fee* for an unrestricted search through the indexes for six hours by personal search.

The fees during 1956 for searches and copies of entries were:

- i. *The Registrar General, General Register Office, Strand, London, W. C. 2. England.*
 - a. Personal application for a particular search in a consecutive period of five years in the Indexes (approx.)
1s 6d (24 cents)
 - b. Postal application for a particular search in a consecutive period of five years 3s 9d (55 cents)
 - c. Issue of a copy of an entry traced 3s 9d (55 cents)
 - d. If desired, issue of a short form birth record 9d (12 cents)
 - e. Personal general search in the Indexes up to six hours £1 10s Od (\$4.40)
- ii. *The Superintendent Registrar at the local Register Office.*
 - a. Personal application for a particular search. As above.
 - b. Postal application for a particular search. As above.

- c. Issue of a copy of entry traced. As above.
- d. If desired, issue of a short form birth record. As above.
- e. Personal general search in the Indexes, at the convenience of the Superintendent registrar 7s 6d (\$1.10)
- iii. *Postage.* Unless application is made to the Registrar General, Somerset House, from addresses within the British Isles, it is necessary to send money for return postage (5 cents ordinary mail or 15 cents air mail).

All applications to a local superintendent registrar should be accompanied by a self-addressed envelope together with sufficient postage. Postage stamps, other than British, are valueless in England. When contacting a superintendent registrar, send about ten cents extra to allow for a bank exchange fee on checks or money orders.

The following information is usually found in records of birth, marriage, and death. This is based upon the information usually required at the registration of the event.

A. Birth Records.

1. When and where born.
2. Name, if any.
3. Sex.
4. Name and surname of father.
5. Name and maiden surname of mother.
6. Rank or profession of father.
7. Signature, description and residence of informant.
8. Date when registered.
9. Signature of registrar.
10. Baptismal name, if added *after* registration of birth.

If, at the time of the registration of the birth, the name of the child had not been decided upon, then column 2 (*name, if any*) will be left blank. If no first given name is registered, then the Indexes will not carry the reference under the first given name, but will identify the entry as "male" or "female," at the conclusion of all entries of the surname concerned in that particular volume.

If the mother has been married previously, the informant is supposed to inform the registrar, who then records that fact. For instance, Mary Smith married first John Brown. After his death she married Philip Thomas. In the birth record of her son by Phillip Thomas she would be described as Mary Thomas *late* Brown *formerly* Smith. If the informant of the birth did not reveal this information, then the birth record will not have it.

When a child is born out of wedlock, the name of the father of the child might not be entered, especially if the informant declines to state the name of the father. Since 1875, provision has been made so that the name of the person acknowledging himself to be the father of a child born out of wedlock may be inserted into the child's birth record only if he attends with the mother of the child at the office where the birth is registered. The birth registered in this manner is indexed under both surnames.

Prior to Sept. 1911, the birth indexes do not indicate the surname of the mother.

Before 1875 some births were not registered, but if the person in question was baptized by a clergyman, a certificate of baptism might be obtained from the records of the church in which the baptism took place. Application would have to be made to the particular church where the event was recorded.

Short-form birth certificates, issued at a special low fee, do not contain the above details, but only give the name of the child, date of birth, and the district and sub-district in which the birth was registered. No street or locality address or parentage are shown. These short certificates are valuable only when you need date of birth and name of the child, assuming you already know the parentage.

It is unwise to visit personally or write to Somerset House, London, to apply for *birth records*, for instance, of a Mary Harris born in 1851 in Leeds, Yorkshire, or of a Margaret Jones born 1850 in Merthyr Tydfil, Glamorgan, Wales, if nothing else is known. These names, like many others in England and Wales, may be traced in the Indexes several times over in one year in one locality. How will you identify *your* required reference? Even if the officials were asked to check all references against the actual birth entries in the registers, how will he identify *your* Mary Harris or *your* Margaret Jones?

Sometimes, even if one supplies the name of the father of the child, there may be several children born in the same year and locality with a father of the same name. If at the time of application the occupation and residence of the father and the first given name of the mother are known, then the official has evidence upon which to base his decision in issuing a copy of a likely entry.

Where such identification conflicts occur, it may be well to examine carefully every fact. It may be that there is information on hand regarding the names of brothers and sis-

ters. By obtaining the birth records of these other children it might be possible to determine which is the birth entry of the child or children where identification is difficult. Prior to visiting or writing for information all the facts should be marshalled, so that identification is positive.

There are many who think it is wasteful duplication to spend 7s 6d (\$1.10) to obtain a record of an event where some of the facts are already known, but there are many important reasons for obtaining such records.

A few reasons are:

- i. The birth record reveals the correct *birth date*, essential for a correct record.
- ii. The precise *place* is valuable, not only to obtain a correct record, but also essential for addresses to be traced in Census records, and moreover to ascertain the correct parish of residence.
- iii. When the maiden surname of the mother is unknown, the birth record of a child, if after 1837, may solve the problem. Information may show that the mother had been married previously. That she had been a widow may have been long forgotten by the family, but such information is of first importance in seeking her marriage record and also in tracing her birth record.
- iv. In some cases a birth record may not reveal that the mother was previously married, but the record of the birth of another child in the family may note it, a good reason why records of other children's births should be sought.

B. Marriage Records.

These records are particularly valuable, as they show the religious denomination of the place where the marriage was solemnized or the register office if no religious ceremony took place. The signatures (or marks) of the parties and witnesses are also given, together with the following details:

1. Date of marriage.
2. Names and surnames of both parties.
3. Ages of both parties.
4. Marital condition at date of marriage.
5. Rank or profession.
6. Residence at time of marriage.
7. Father's name and surname (of both parties).
8. Father's rank or profession.

It is usually impractical to make a search in the marriage indexes at Somerset House, London, unless the full names

of both persons, *as at the time of the marriage*, are known. Since 1912 there is a cross-reference in the indexes to the surname of the husband or wife, but prior to 1912 searching the indexes for a marriage *involves checking two indexes*—one index under the surname and name of the bridegroom and another index under the surname and name of the bride. If the bride had not been married previously, then the surname to seek would be her maiden surname. If she was a widow at the time of the marriage in question, then the surname to seek would be that of her late husband, and in such cases her *maiden surname* would *not* appear in the indexes. Generally speaking, the reference traced for the bridegroom will be identical with the reference traced for the bride, and that is usually the only way in which one may tell that it is the reference to the marriage being sought. By illustration, suppose that John Brown married Mary Smith, at Doncaster, Yorks, 20 January 1845. In the March quarter of 1845 under “Brown” will appear an entry:

Brown, John Doncaster XXII p. 192.

In the March quarter of 1845 under “Smith” will appear an entry:

Smith, Mary Doncaster XXII p. 192.

If at the time of the search, the searcher does not know that the woman concerned is a widow, he will not be able to trace the marriage by using her maiden surname as a basis for the search in the indexes. This is one of the reasons why persons searching for marriage records are often unsuccessful. In 1941, over 7 per cent and in 1851, over 9 per cent of women who married were widows, and they married in the surnames of their late husbands. In these cases, after the marriage has been traced, the column showing the name of their fathers is a clear indication as to their maiden surnames. Occasionally, with uncommon names, like *Cornelius Joseph Stainer*, the marriage may be easily traced without referring to the index reference of the bride, but such a case is usually unusual.

If one were personally searching for the marriage of *James Etherington* of Carlisle, Cumberland and *Isabel Harrison* of Whitehaven, Cumberland, between 1837 and 1841, it would be necessary to pay the search fee of 1s 6d at Somerset House after having completed the special marriage

application form furnished at that office. One would go to the correct shelf or *gallery* where the marriage record Indexes are stacked for the period 1837 to 1841. If the first known child of the couple or some other important fact indicated that they were married by 1842, it would be well to commence with the year 1841 and work backwards. Choosing the least common name and surname of the two, one would check under letter "E" for *Etherington*, James; it would be wise to check, too, under letter "H" for *Hetherington* or *Heatherington* for possible phonetic spellings. Any references found in 1841 (four separate volumes for the quarters, March, June, September and December) should be written down. One would then check under letter "H" for *Harrison*, Isabel. If any references to Isabel Harrison were exactly the same as for James Etherington (or similar spellings), one would enter the particular reference on the application form and hand it in to the official with the fee of 3s 9d for issue of a copy of the entry. If the entry was not found in 1841, one would continue the same plan through the quarters of each of the years 1840 back through 1837 or until the marriage was found. If not found in the five-year period now searched, it might be that the spelling of the names of the parties is unusual, or that they married prior to 1837 or after 1841. If married prior 1 July 1837 the entry of marriage will not be in the marriage records at Somerset House. If married after 1841 one may pay another fee of 1s 6d and continue the search for another period of five years, such as 1842 to 1846. There is one flaw in the above system: it concerns common English surnames such as Smith and Welsh surnames such as Williams, Thomas. An index reference of William Smith may agree with the reference for Mary Hill; the same may occur for William Jones and Mary Williams, but in both cases it may not be the marriage one seeks. In one instance it may be that another couple of exactly the same names married about the same time as the couple being sought. In another instance it may be that several entirely different marriages may appear on the same page of the same volume, therefore all having the same references. For instance, Vol. XX, page 636, may contain a marriage of William Smith to Jane Brown and a marriage of Stephen Langton to Mary Hill; therefore the apparent evidence of the index reference William Smith and Mary Hill is actually

misleading. This does not occur often, but when it does, it can cause considerable confusion to the visitor at Somerset House, London.

Searching for marriages is less difficult if reasonable information is available. In the case of the name William Smith, in a search made of the indexes of 1845-1855, there were about 120 such marriages during three months and therefore about 2,400 such entries in five years. This is just plain *William Smith* without names such as William Henry Smith and all sorts of other variations. Even with such difficulties one can but marvel at the way officials and others at Somerset House are able to find entries. It is said that there are over 200 million records of births, marriages and deaths filed there since 1837.

It is often wise to assess carefully the particulars of any entry traced—if the surnames concerned are very common—to be sure that the certificate actually relates to the case in mind. The cost of a marriage entry is not excessive—only 7s 6d (\$1.10) if traced in the first period of five years searched by correspondence. Here are some reasons for obtaining marriage records:—

- i. The correct date and place is given. The place of marriage may be important, as it may indicate that the ceremony was in a parish Church of England, or in a Roman Catholic Chapel, or a chapel of one of the many Nonconformist denominations, in a Jewish Synagogue or in a register office without any religious ceremony. This helps define the probable religion of a family.
- ii. The year of marriage may be close to that of a Census year, and may thus assist in determining more about members of the family from the census schedule of the address given on the marriage record.
- iii. An important feature of a marriage record is the information given concerning the name and occupation of the father of each party. This may be the principal reason for obtaining a record of a marriage, for the name of the father is needed to assist in identifying the birth record of the party being married. In some marriage records the name of the father is missing. When this arises in marriages since July, 1837, there may be several reasons, as follows:
 - a. The party being married was born out of wedlock.
 - b. Occasionally it has been found that the father of the person was deceased and so was omitted from the record.

- c. Experience has shown that occasionally the person who made the record was negligent and failed to record the information.
- iv. Some marriage records will state the name of the father, together with the word *deceased* indicating that the father had died prior to the date of the marriage. When marriage records do not indicate *deceased*, this is no proof that the father was living at that date, as many cases show that probably the person recording the marriage did not bother to enquire.
- v. The age given on a marriage record usually requires careful examination in the light of the particular case involved. Age "21" years is sometimes misleading, as occasionally it refers merely to the fact that the person concerned was "of full legal age." In England and Wales the term "full age" means 21 years and upwards, and "minor" means under 21 years.
- vi. Residence at time of marriage is no proof as to birthplace, and in many cases the "residence" may have been but a temporary address.
- vii. The rank and profession of the persons being married and of their fathers may have a great deal of bearing upon identification of the same persons in other records.

C. Death Records.

Information called for at the time of registration:

1. When and where died.
2. Name and surname of deceased.
3. Sex.
4. Age at death.
5. Rank and profession.
6. Cause of death.
7. Signature, description, and residence of informant.
8. Date when registered.
9. Signature of the registrar.

In column 1 of the entry, the place of death is not always the residence of the deceased, who may have died away from home.

In column 4, the age at death is that stated by the informant, and occasionally such ages vary from the true age.

In column 5, persons under 16 years of age usually are described as "son or daughter" of their father or mother. Also, in the case of married women or widows the name of their spouse is often recorded. In some death records the usual address of the deceased may also appear in column 5 if the death took place away from home.

In column 6 the cause of death may be of interest if it should be followed by a coroner's inquest which may have received attention in local newspapers.

In column 7 the informant may be a relative, and a relationship may be stated; or may be a neighbour; or may be the coroner.

Records of death are sometimes very difficult to trace unless one has a considerable amount of information at hand to identify the correct entry. In a search made for the death of a *Thomas Jones*, it was found that no less than fifty-three men of this name died in a single three-month period. Which of the fifty-three was the record of the man being sought? It is always important to supply the age, relationships, places and occupation, and as near as possible the likely date of death when applying for a death record. After 1st July 1837 all deaths have been registered, since no burial is permitted without a certificate from either the registrar or the coroner, indicating that the proper civil authorities have been notified of the event. Those who died and whose identity was unknown (such as persons found dead or persons whose bodies were recovered but unrecognizable) are registered as *unknown*. Here are some reasons why death records should be obtained:—

- i. The correct date and place of death are shown. The address of death is usually that of the deceased's family, and therefore the Census records of that address or locality may locate additional facts concerning the whole family.
- ii. The age at death, if more or less correct, will provide good approximation for the birth year. In the case of the records of very old persons the age given may be several years out, according to the memory of the deceased and that of the person who registered the death.
- iii. The informant at death may be a close relative and as such may be a deciding factor in determining whether the record traced refers to the individual whose record is sought. It is sometimes practical to follow the clues concerning the informant in tracing collateral descent of the pedigree.
- iv. The occupation of the deceased, as registered, may be a further deciding factor when several persons of the same name are found recorded in the death registers. In the case of a woman, it may be that the evidence all points to her being an ancestress, but the given name of her husband has never been fully determined. On the death record she may be described as "the wife" or "the widow" of a certain man, thus determining his given name.

- v. There are many instances of elderly persons dying a considerable distance from their former residences. By tracing their death records one may find where they went to live. This may lead to tracing additional facts in the Census records, and also to tracing other members of their family who also migrated to that locality.
- vi. Burial registers of churchyards and cemeteries often give details so brief as to be almost impossible to identify clearly. If the burial was after 1 July 1837, a death record, often fully identifying the deceased, may be obtained.

The death indexes at Somerset House from 1837 to 1865 give only the name of the deceased, the name of the district in which he died, and the volume and page number. This information is extremely scanty. Since 1866 the indexes show the age of the deceased at death, which helps considerably in identification.

III—Applications by Correspondence.

Write a *clear* and *concise* letter, and attempt to give all details possible.

Use as a *guide* the information cited earlier in this chapter, since this information is required at registration of the event (*see* A. Birth Records, B. Marriage Records, C. Death Records).

All fees for the searches plus the fee for the copy of any entry must be sent *in advance*. (*See* list of fees payable). If the entry is not traced in the precise year given as likely for the event, then the officials will search for two years either side of that year, or a total of five years. If still not found, the fee covering the issue of a copy of the record will be returned.

If vague and conflicting information is given it is often impossible for the officials to trace the correct entry. The fact that the entry has not been traced by a search does not always mean that the entry was not registered. It may mean that insufficient information was given to identify the entry, and that the applicant should attempt to find additional details or more specific evidence.

IV—Divorce Records.

The earliest divorce records are for 1852, but they are kept in a different department. Enquiries, stating full partic-

ulars, enclosing a fee of 12s 6d (\$1.90), should be addressed as follows: —

The Record Keeper,
Divorce Registry,
Somerset House, Strand
London, W. C. 2, England.

V—Adopted Children.

The registers concerning adopted children began in the year 1927, and are kept at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, W.C. 2.

VI—When to Ask the Superintendent Registrar for Records.

It is apparent that there are limitations upon what may be requested and traced through the Indexes at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London. It is true that when a birth, marriage, and death is registered, the copy is filed at Somerset House, but the entry is not traceable without adequate identifying information. If an application has failed to trace an entry at Somerset House, it may then be wise to consider writing to the local register office of the district where the events are said to have taken place and to request the superintendent registrar to take an interest in the matter. He is not required to make extra-ordinary or unusual searches.

Personal visits may be made to his office where the records are “to be made available at all reasonable times.”¹ If one cannot attend personally or cannot send a friend, then the superintendent registrar may take an interest in an enquiry by correspondence. These officials are busy men, and requests for their services should always be concise and *to the point*. All fees should be promptly paid. (See list of fees in this chapter). Here are some common limitations to tracing records at Somerset House:—

- i. *First Given Names*. Unless the first given name is known and quoted in the application, it is impossible for officials at Somerset House to make a search. For example, one cannot write to Somerset House for “all the births, marriages, and deaths of the children of Henry Gardner of Liverpool” or “of Owen Evans of Llandrindrod Wells” or “of the family of Jones of Pembroke.” It must be clearly understood that the Indexes at Somerset House are

1. Sect. 32 of the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1874.

not cross-referenced and the records are not inter-related in any way, and the records are not in family order. The Indexes are quarterly alphabetical lists of events.

To trace a particular event, the full names and surname, together with identifying particulars *must* be supplied. Children registered without a first given name are recorded in the Indexes as *male* or *female* under their surname. Too, there are unknown factors, such as a person with several first given names. A search for the birth of Jane Gardner would fail at Somerset House if she were registered as Amelia Jane Gardner. Similarly no trace would be found for William Mead if his name were Alfred William Mead. Again, a child christened as *Mary Job* and so registered in the Church of England parish registers may be difficult to trace if her parents had registered her at the register office as *Esther Job*, but this is unusual.

- ii. *Widows.* A search for the marriage of a widow under her maiden surname will fail. Unless her current surname at the time of her remarriage is known, it is difficult to trace the record.
- iii. *Several Different Spellings.* Applications to Somerset House will fail to trace entries because the applicant stated a certain spelling different to that contained in the Indexes, even though the desired entry exists. Anne *Homphrey* was registered in 1846, her sister Mary *Humphrey* in 1850; their father married in 1845 as David *Homfray*, and his death record spells the surname *Humphreys* in 1851. All of these spellings appear on *different* pages of the Somerset House Indexes.
- iv. *Frequency of Common Names.* Some names are so common, like William Smith, John Jones, that it is almost hopeless to pick them out of the Indexes at Somerset House without specific identification.
- v. *Phonetics and Accents.* These are closely allied to different spellings, but strangers to a particular locality cannot "guess" at peculiarities and may have to rely on the good common sense of a local official to help them out. *Gibbs* may thus be spelled *Gabe* or *Geeb* and *Gebe*. The problem of the *aspirate* occurs in such renderings as *Ellerby* and *Helloby* and *Oxton* and *Hoxton*.
- vi. *Handwriting Errors.* When Dorothy Sarah Jennison was married in 1853, the reference was indexed under letter "T", as *Tennison*, and it is believed that the great English actress, Ellen Terry, (1847-1928), is recorded in the birth indexes under letter "F", *Ferry*.
- vii. *Death records.* These are often very difficult to trace, especially prior to 1865. It was not until 1865 that the Index references at Somerset House included the ages of

the deceased, so that in common names it is impossible to tell (from the Index) which reference belongs to the person concerned.

The above limitations are often overcome by using the services of the local superintendent registrar.

Before writing to a superintendent registrar of a particular district, it is essential that one knows the locality (village, town, parish, or city) where the family usually resided. Such information may have been obtained from old letters, census records, parish registers, and other reliable sources, as well as from birth, marriage, and death certificates already traced.

If available, the *Official List of Registration Officers*² may also be checked. In using this list, see if the name of the place concerned is included and if so, the address of the register office of the superintendent registrar will be given. One should address a letter bearing his title, and not his name. If this book fails to trace the name of the place desired, it is a simple matter to check the *Index to Places in the 1851 Census*³ which shows the *district* in which every place in England and Wales was situated in 1851—often the same district as at present.

If still in doubt, check the map of the county concerned for the name of the nearest large town to the village concerned, or, as a last resort write to the Registrar General, Somerset House, London, W.C. 2, and ask for the address of the superintendent registrar's office covering the locality (village, parishes, etc.) concerned. Money for return postage must be included.

When writing to superintendent registrars, always be courteous in requesting his personal consideration of the problem. State that the purpose of the enquiry concerns one's own family connections and ask him to forward it to the correct superintendent registrar if the records of the village or parish in question are not in his care. If an unsuccessful search has already been made at Somerset House, mention that fact. Long rambling letters with enclosures of

2. General Register Office London, *The Official List, Part 1 (List of Registration Officers)* (London: H. M. Stationery Office). Library call number at the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City: R6A82.

3. *Census of Great Britain, 1851. Index to the names of the Parishes, Townships and Places* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1852). Library call number at Genealogical Society, R6A90.

pedigree charts and family group records are ill-advised, as the superintendent is not required to make protracted searches, but he may desire to help trace some specific details on certain families. Courteous, clearly written and precise letters should be accompanied by money orders to cover searches (*see* list of fees) and return postage. These letters should also contain a promise (*which must always be honored*) to pay any additional fees required upon notification.

It should be remembered that the records of the office of the superintendent registrar relate to events which took place in that district only. If the family in question frequently moved from place to place, the superintendent registrar cannot trace any events which took place outside of his district. Occasionally such movements may be apparent when a Census record of a family shows where the children were born.

Sometimes it is known that there were several children in a family, but their names have long been forgotten. As these children cannot be traced through the Indexes at Somerset House, how may their records be found? Assuming that all were born in the same locality, their records may be in the register office of that district. For instance, it was known that William Ivey was born 18 April 1883 at Bearpark Colliery, Elvet, County Durham, the son of Joseph Ivey, a coal miner, by his wife Pheobe Ivey formerly Holmes. This birth record was easily obtained from Somerset House, London, but as William Ivey was deceased and the family in England scattered, there was no one within easy contact who could give the names of other children of Joseph Ivey, of which there were said to be nine. A letter was addressed to the "*Superintendent Registrar, The Register Office, North Street, Durham, County Durham.*"

As a special favour will you please consider the following problem and make searches in the records at your office. My father William Ivey was born 18 April 1883 at Bearpark Colliery, Elvet, son of Joseph Ivey, a coal miner, by his wife Pheobe formerly Holmes.

It is said that they had ten children, but apart from Jennie and Daniel all their names have been forgotten. Please search the birth records of the district for the surname *Ivey*. Where births of children are recorded for these parents, please send a copy of each entry, searching a number of years each side of 1883. One long standard birth record and the rest as short form birth records will suffice.

If the marriage of the parents or the deaths of any of the children appear, I shall be delighted to obtain the details. The enclosed \$3 (One Guinea) is a deposit for this general search, and if the fees are more, I shall be pleased to send the balance.

The superintendent registrar reported "an exhaustive search" and mentioned that he had traced birth entries for ten children, also death records for three of the children, as well as marriages for eight children, but had not been able to trace the marriage record of the parents in that district. The records of birth ranged from 1883 to 1905, and the marriages to later dates. As the district contains a large population, the searches must have taken considerable effort, for which the recipient of the information was most grateful.

In the 1851 census records of Shoreditch (London) appeared George Gardner, printer, with a wife, Jane, and a daughter, Jane A. Gardner, aged 9 years born in Lambeth, Surrey. The birth record of this child would reveal the maiden name of the mother and the address of the family in 1841. The Birth Indexes at Somerset House failed to disclose the reference for Jane A. Gardner of Lambeth or London localities. Occasionally one may make a "successful guess," and in this case it was noted that there was a reference for an Amelia J. Gardner, December quarter, Lambeth (1841). The copy of the birth certificate showed that Amelia Jane Gardner was born 12 Sept. 1841 in Lambeth. It is foolish to rely always upon a "successful guess," but if a letter had been written to the superintendent registrar at Lambeth, Surrey (London), the entry may have been easily traced. In the indexes at the Lambeth Register Office there would be the one reference of *Gardner*, Amelia J(ane), whereas in the Indexes for England and Wales at the General Register Office, Somerset House, there is a page of Gardner references for each quarter of the year.

The birth record of Mary Ann, daughter of *George Harry Stainer*, coast guard, by his wife *Mary Ann Robinson* was traced in 1847, but the marriage of this couple was not found. At the local register office, the superintendent registrar traced the entry of marriage in 1843 as *Henry Stayner*, coast guard, and *Mary Robinson*. As the man was in the Coast Guard Service his identify was sure. He signed *Stayner* at the time of marriage, but the child's birth record was registered by the mother who made her mark "X" as *Mary*

Ann Stainer, and permitted her husband to be described as George Harry Stainer. Because of these differences, the index references at Somerset House were not obvious.

Even the most difficult of problems may be solved by being patient. Occasionally a child will be registered at the register office in one name, christened in a Church in another name, and will then use the first given name of the christening through life. Thomas Job and family was traced in the 1851 census as follows:—

Parish of Llanpumpsaint, Caermarthenshire

Farm named Ffoes-y-Broga.

Head	Thomas Job	married	age 38	farmer born	Llanpumpsaint.
Wife	Hannah do	do	do 22	do	Abergwilly.
Dau.	Mary do		do 2	do	Llanpumpsaint.

This was definitely the ancestral family, but little was known about the wife, Hannah. What was her maiden surname, and when did she marry?

The indexes at Somerset House failed to disclose the birth reference for the child Mary Job, aged 2 years, in 1851 (therefore born 1848-1849). The superintendent registrar failed to trace the entry of birth for Mary Job, or for any other children in the family of Thomas Job. The marriage registers of Llanpumpsaint and Abergwilly localities failed to trace the marriage of Thomas Job to Hannah. The Church of England parish registers for Llanpumpsaint revealed a christening entry dated 30 November 1848 for Mary, daughter of Thomas and Hannah Job, of Llanpumpsaint. Writing once again to the superintendent registrar at Carmarthen, quoting the entry from the 1851 Census and the christening from the parish, and requesting a careful study of the facts and a new search in the birth records produced results. Trace was found:

Born 21 September 1848 at Foesybrog, Llanpumpsaint Parish.

Esther daughter of Thomas Job a farmer and Hannah Job formerly Daniel.

Informant signed: Thomas Job, father, Foesybrog, Llanpumpsaint.

Without a doubt here was the birth of Mary Job, but she was registered as Esther Job. Between the time the birth was registered in September, 1848, and the time when the child was christened in November, 1848, the parents probably

changed their minds as to the name of the child, but they did not bother to amend the registered entry of birth at the register office. The Indexes at the register office and at Somerset House list this birth as *Esther Job*.

Marriages of widows are often difficult to trace. Occasionally those who are stated to be widows are not widows at all. For example: Robert Roberts' (Of Rhyl in North Wales), first wife died in 1886, and the family tradition stated that Robert then married Jane Ellis who may have been a widow. No marriage is filed at Somerset House under these names. However the superintendent registrar traced the entry of this man, 12 June 1893, Robert Roberts, a widower, and Jane Ellis Jones, aged 40 years, a *spinster*. She was *not* surnamed Ellis, and she was *not* a widow.

Peculiarities of spelling are always a problem. For Mary Humphries, said to be born in 1848 in Aberdare, Glamorganshire, daughter of David Humphries and his wife, Mary Mathews, a trial search at Somerset House failed to trace the record. Aberdare was found to be near Merthyr Tydfil which has a superintendent registrar. His cooperation was requested. He, in turn, sent the enquiry to Pontypridd, because records for Aberdare were there. This resulted in tracing the birth record and other details on the family, as follows: (see PLATE II)

- a. Birth of Mary *Humphrey* 3 March 1850 at Cwmbach, Aberdare.
- b. Birth of her sister, Anne *Homphrey* at Tiryfounder, Aberdare, 3 Dec. 1845.
- c. Death of their father, David *Humphreys* at Werfa, Aberdare, 4 Sept. 1851.
- d. These facts led to the 1851 Census records of the family.
- e. Realizing the difficulty in tracing the marriage record of the parents, a request was sent back to the superintendent registrar asking whether the marriage of the parents was on record. The entry was traced dated 26 Feb. 1845, David *Homfray* and Mary Mathews. If this marriage had taken place outside of the same district, the search at Somerset House would have been extremely difficult and expensive, as one would not necessarily think of the variation *Homfray* as being the same surname as *Humphreys* and the other spellings.

Phonetics, the misuse of the letter "H" and accent-spellings always haunt the ardent genealogist while he tries to

1 847 Marriage Solemnized at Perth Church
 District of Perth in the County of Perth
 No. 296 When Married January 26 1845
 Name and Surname David Homfray Age 32 years
Mary Mathews maid spinster
 Married in the Perth Church according to the R[ite]
 The Marriage was solemnized between us David Homfray & Mary Mathews in the Presence of us W. Rowland & David Mathews

1 848 Birth in the Sub-District of Aberdare
 No. 296 When and Where Born December 26 1845
 Name, if any Anne Sex Girl
 Name and Surname of Father David Homfray
 Name and Surname of Mother Mary Mathews

1 849 Birth in the Sub-District of Aberdare
 No. 297 When and Where Born January 26 1846
 Name, if any David Sex Male
 Name and Surname of Father David Homfray
 Name and Surname of Mother Mary Mathews

1 851 Death in the Sub-district of Aberdare
 No. 298 When and where Died Fourth September 1851
 Name and Surname David Homfray Sex Male Age 29 years
Wife Mathews Abdare

PLATE II: Illustration of the spelling of Homfray, Humphrey, Homphrey, Humphreys, family records in birth, marriage, and death registers.

imagine why the record, "which must be there," cannot be traced.

Alfred Ellerby was born in 1848 in the locality of Bradford, Yorkshire. The Indexes at Somerset House under Ellerby and Hellerby and a few other variations failed to trace the record. A letter was sent to the *superintendent registrar* of Bradford, Yorkshire, who traced the entry of birth as Alfred *Helloby*.

In another part of this chapter is mentioned the case of the seven children recorded in four different spellings of *Colsell*. Mention is also made of the *Gibb*, *Geeb*, *Gabe* problem, presumably caused by Somersetshire accents.

All entries are recorded by hand. The certified copies of the entries are not infallible, since interpretation of the individual handwriting of the thousands of registrars will vary with the clerk who copies them. The records at Somerset House are not originals, but are copies of the records kept in the local Register Office. When doubts arise, a check of the original is often possible. Records relating to other members of the family in the same generation may bring forth some other variation of a spelling. What may seem as useless duplication in obtaining an entry of an event already recorded in the family genealogy may actually suggest a fresh examination of the problem because of a variation not previously considered.

Death records are often so difficult to obtain that some people ignore them altogether. This is unwise, and may cause one to trace a false pedigree because the real evidence was never taken into consideration.

Family records stated that Mrs. Ann Williams, wife of David Williams, died 8 June 1843, aged about 39 years, and her husband died 24 November 1849, aged about 56 or 57 years. Both were residents of Ystradgunlais, Breconshire. Officials at Somerset House failed to trace either entry. The map shows Ystradgunlais to be on the border near Glamorganshire, and the nearest towns are Neath and Swansea. A letter was written to the *superintendent registrar* at Neath:

"As a special favor will you please search for the death records of my great-grandparents" (stating the above particulars).

A reply was received from the register office, Swansea, (as Ystradgunlais was not in Neath District and the letter had been passed on from there). Two records of death were enclosed, and agreed with the information sent, except for slight differences. Her name was spelled *Anne* (and not

Ann), she died on the 9th (and not on the 8th) of June. His record varied, having died on 24 *August* (and not 24 November). These deaths took place in an area where the names were so common one could not commence research without specific information. No reason is given why the searcher at Somerset House failed to trace the correct entries in the Quarterly Indexes, but the names are extremely frequent in those records.

Upon obtaining a certain marriage record from Somerset House, it was noted that Henry Osborne married 28 January 1847 at Camborne (Redruth), Cornwall, that he was by occupation a miner, and that he was a widower residing at Treloarwarren Street. The 1851 Census stated that he was then 59, and that his wife was 33 years of age. The 1841 Census showed he was approximately 45 and that his wife (whose name was illegible) was aged between 35 and 39 years. What was the name of his previous wife, and when did she die? A letter was sent to the superintendent registrar of Redruth:—

“My grandfather was Henry Osborne, and in June 1851 he was residing at Rablins Row near Treloarwarren Street, Camborne. He was a miner by occupation. At his re-marriage in 1847 he was a widower. The name of his previous wife is not known to me. As a special favor will you please search the death records from 1846 back to 1837 for the death of Mrs. Osborne, wife of Henry Osborne, above. As this is an unusual request, your kind cooperation will be appreciated. Enclosed is 10s 6d (\$1.50) for the General Search, and if the charge is more I shall be pleased to send it.”

The reply received enclosed the record of death for Mrs. Elizabeth Osborne, wife of Henry Osborne, miner, of Treloarwarren Street. She died 14 January 1846, aged 46.

Examples such as these should build up one's confidence in actually being able to trace records of events that have eluded first attempts to trace them. In the next chapter will be found examples of irregularities caused by incorrect statements given by the parties concerned with the events.

Chapter Five

EXAMPLES OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

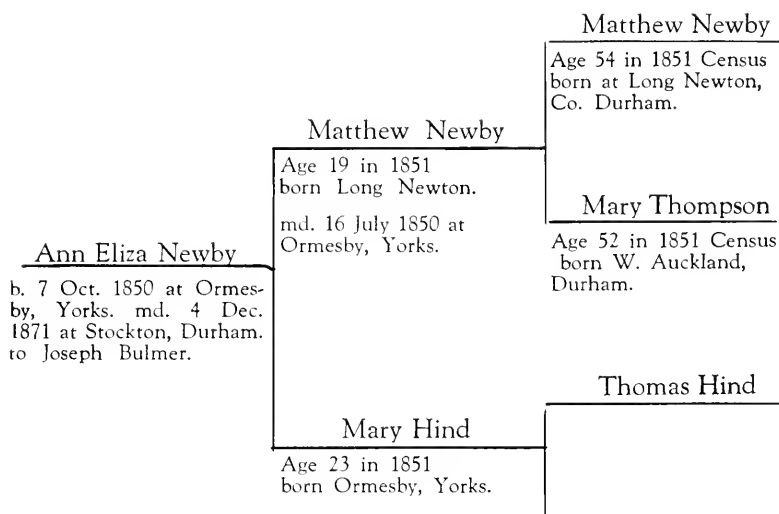
The first example of civilian registrations relates to a normal pedigree without any anomalies, showing how the records may be used. Then will follow examples of irregular entries. Because a person attends a register office or a church and signs a document, that is not proof that the information is true. Similarly, because a registrar issues a copy of the same document, perhaps under the seal of the Registrar General, that is no certification that the facts are true, but merely a statement that it is a true copy of the original entry.

I. A Normal Pedigree from Vital Records

Family sources indicated that Ann Eliza Newby (born 1850) married Joseph Bulmer about 1871 and that her family were of Long Newton and Ormesby. At Somerset House the marriage was traced, and that record revealed that she was married 4 December 1871, at Stockton, Co. Durham, and that she was the daughter of Matthew Newby.

From these facts a search was made at Somerset House for her record of birth, which was traced. This recorded that she was born 7 October 1850 at Ormesby, North Yorkshire, daughter of Matthew Newby and his wife, Mary Newby, formerly Hind. The 1851 census of Long Newton showed that Ann Eliza was their first child. A search was then made for their marriage, which was traced at Somerset House, the marriage having taken place 16 July 1850 at Ormesby. This record stated that Matthew Newby was the son of another Matthew Newby. The 1841 census of Long Newton revealed Matthew Newby, Junior, residing with his parents, and there was another child in the family born after registration commenced in 1837. This child was Joseph Newby born 1840. His birth record was also obtained from Somerset House, and said that he was the son of Matthew Newby by his wife, Mary, formerly Thompson. Here is a skeleton pedigree, showing also details from the census records. (See page 71.)

Searches continued in parish registers, census records, birth, marriage, and death records, and tombstone inscriptions. Apart from slight variations many problems may be a repetition of this example.



II Irregular Records Disclosed

Unusual circumstances give rise to false conclusions or bring to a halt the research. To be forewarned is to be forearmed! Here are a few of the many irregularities and inconsistencies that may cause trouble in attempting to trace a true pedigree.

- i. *Birth Entry Falsely Indicates Legitimacy*
Registration District of Nottingham
Birth at Commerce Street, St. Mary
31 July 1842. John son of John Wh.....,
framework knitter, and Elizabeth Wh.....,
formerly Wa.....

The above indicates that the child John is the legitimate son of John Wh..... by his wife, Elizabeth Wh....., whose maiden surname was Wa..... No marriage entry was traced from 1842 back to 1837, but on a re-check a trial search 1842 to 1846 disclosed the marriage two years *after* the above child was born. This showed the following:

Registration District Nottingham
27 May 1844 John Wh..... of full age, a bachelor and a framework knitter of Sherwins Court, son of Michael Wh..... (married to) Elizabeth Wa..... of full age, spinster a seamer of Sherwins Court, daughter of Zacharia Wa.....

The full names are withheld to avoid embarrassment to descendants.

There were children born to above parents in 1845, 1847, and 1851, and this family was recorded in the 1851 Census with no indication that the first child was born before the parents were married.

ii. *Birth Entry Falsely Indicates Legitimacy*

The birth record of Frederick C....., dated 1857, shows him to be the legitimate son of George C..... and Elizabeth C..... formerly B..... The 1861 Census was then obtained and this showed the family as follows:

Head—George C....., age 32, all born in same city.
 wife—Elizabeth C....., age 32,
 Dau.—Elizabeth C....., age 11,
 Dau.—Mary Ann C....., age 9,
 Son—George F. C....., age 6,
 Son—Frederick C....., age 4,
 Dau.—Rosa C....., age 2,

Application was then made to the superintendent registrar of the city, requesting his assistance in tracing the birth records of the above children and any others born to the same parents. The records of nine children were traced, from Mary Ann born in 1852, to Florence May born 1870, but no record was found for the child, Elizabeth (age 11 in 1861 born about 1849-1850). The records of all nine indicated that they were legitimately born. No entry of the marriage of George C..... to his wife, Elizabeth, could be traced, first searching 1850 back to 1841, and then a trial search 1851 to 1855. The search for this marriage was made both in Somerset House, and in the local register office.

A search was made in the 1851 Census of the entire city, without tracing a family agreeing with the particulars. During the course of this lengthy search, the following was noted which seemed to be of interest:—

Head—Elizabeth V....., age 22
 dau—Elizabeth V....., age 1
 Visitor—George C....., age 22, a shoemaker.

The birth of the child Elizabeth V..... was traced in 1849, indicating she was the daughter of James Daniel V..... by his wife Elizabeth B..... who had the same

identity as the mother of the children of George C..... who were born 1852 to 1870. Had George C..... married a widow named Elizabeth V.....?

No death was traced for James Daniel V..... 1849 to 1853, but he may have died outside of England or under some unidentifiable name.

Since the marriage of George C..... to Elizabeth was of importance in determining their father's names, a search was commenced in the marriage Indexes at Somerset House for their marriage, using as a basis of identification the facts known about the family and also the surname V..... A search from 1845 to 1849 traced the marriage of James Daniel V..... to Elizabeth, this took place in 1847 in the same City. Then a search from 1849 onwards was conducted, with the intention to search to as late as 1873 if necessary. The marriage was traced in the year 1864.

It is clear that the children born between 1852 and 1863 were *not* born in wedlock, although the parents registered the entries as if the children were legitimate. It is also clear that the 1861 Census which indicates a child named Elizabeth C..... aged 11 years, is also not a true record, for the child was actually Elizabeth V....., and not a daughter by birth to George C.....

iii. Confusion Over A First Given Name.

Is the first given name always correct as recorded on a certificate? In the marriage register of 16 March 1863 at Old St. Pancras Church, Middlesex, is the entry of marriage of George Donnett and *Margaret* Ann Dover.

In the records of the birth of their children there is no mention of the first given name of *Margaret*. Note the following information from the birth records. (See Plate I.)

Birthdates	Name of Children	Name and Maiden surname of mother
29 June 1865	Mary Ann Esther Donnett	Mary Ann Donnett formerly Dover
30 Dec. 1869	Ann Johanna Donnett	Mary Donnett formerly Dover
12 Dec. 1874	Eliza Dunnett	Mary Dunnett formerly Dover
29 Apr. 1878	Elizabeth Dunnet	Mary Dunnet formerly Dover

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE,
SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON

Application Number F.S. 156615/53

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		ST. PANCRAS	
Marriage solemnized at		014 St. Pancras	
in the Parish of		St. Pancras	
in the County of		Middlesex	
Name of Groom	Age	Rank or profession	Signature of Registrar
James A. Donnet	21	Labourer	St. Pancras
Name of Bride	Age	Rank or profession	Signature of Registrar
Elizabeth Ann Dover	21	Spinster	St. Pancras
According to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church after Banns by		Richard Chamberlain	
Witnessed by		Elizabeth Dover & Mark	
Witnessed by		James Dover	

MA 18281

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE,
SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON

Application Number F.A.B. 156615/54P

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		FARNHAM	
BIRTH in the Sub-District of		Farnham Town	
in the County of		Surrey	
Name of Child	Sex	Name and surname of father	Rank or profession of father
Twentyfourth June 1906	Girl	George Donnet	Labourer
7 Ashby Street		Mary Ann Donnet formerly Dover	
Signature of Registrar		Signature of Registrar	
St. Pancras		St. Pancras	

BB 182812

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE,
SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		ISLINGTON	
DEATH in the Sub-District of		Farnham	
in the County of		Surrey	
Name of Deceased	Sex	Name and surname of Deceased	Rank or profession of Deceased
George Donnet	Male	George Donnet	Labourer
Age	Age	Age	Age
69 years	69 years	69 years	69 years
Cause of death		Cause of death	
Killed by explosion		Killed by explosion	
Certified by		Certified by	
M. J. S.		M. J. S.	
Signature of Registrar		Signature of Registrar	
St. Pancras		St. Pancras	

DA 182811

PLATE I. Illustration of the confusion of a first-given name and the spelling of the surname.

In the record of birth for the mother of the above children, she is described as *Margaret Ann Dover* born 20 October 1842. At her death, she is recorded as *Mary Dunnett*. Obviously, to make a normal search for the records of this family would result in failure. Note also the change in the spelling of the surname of *Donnett* to *Dunnett*. For instance, if one obtained the birth record of the child, *Elizabeth Dunnett*, in 1878 and then made a search back for the marriage of the parents from 1878 back to 1859, it would never be traced as *George Dunnett* to *Mary Dover*. Even if one knew that the name was interchangeably spelled *Donnett*, it would be impossible to find the marriage of *George Dunnett* or *Donnett* to *Mary* or even *Mary Ann Dover*, when her name at marriage was given as *Margaret Ann Dover*. Compiling true records of a family in such tricky circumstances calls for careful workmanship.

iv. Confusion Over The Mother's Maiden Surname

Is the maiden surname of the mother, given on the birth record of a child always to be relied upon?

If research was commenced by obtaining the birth record of *Emily Stainer*, the following would be traced:—

Birthdate	Child's Name	Name of the Parents
8 January 1849	Emily	Benjamin Stainer and Harriet formerly <i>Tratton</i> .

The 1851 census showed that the first child born to this family was likely *Albert Stainer*, born in 1840. A search was then made for the marriage of *Benjamin Stainer* to *Harriet Tratton* 1841 back to 1837. Such an entry was not found. By obtaining the birth records of other children in the family, the maiden surname of the mother was found to be recorded as *Pratten* also spelled *Pratton*. In the records of four children the maiden surname is spelled with a "P" and in one case the surname was spelled with a "T." The marriage is recorded as *Benjamin Stainer* and *Harriet Pratten*. It may be that the copyist who made out the certificate of birth erred in misreading "P" and placing a letter "T," but whatever the reason, it complicates the issue of identification.

In the case of *Henry Stainer* who married *Elizabeth Richardson* in 1845, the record of the birth of one of their children gives her name as *Elizabeth Stainer* formerly *Rich-*

ards, a totally different surname which would be misleading if one were seeking the marriage of the parents from the evidence of this birth record. It is often wise to obtain the birth records of other children in a family, especially when complications arise and the pedigree is held up because some important record has not been traced under the known identifications.

Sarah Ann Stainer born 1845 is described in her birth entry as being the daughter of John Stainer and Maria Stainer formerly *Dufal*. The marriage record of these parents could not be found from 1845 back to 1837. The 1851 census records revealed other children in this family. Note the following items taken from the records of three of the children: (See Plate II.)

Birthdates	Children	Name of the Parents as Shown On Birth Records
10 March 1841	Elizabeth	John Stainer and Maria Stainer late <i>Lock</i> formerly <i>Dufal</i>
23 June 1843	Emily Jane	John Stainer and Maria Stainer late <i>Dufal</i> formerly <i>Lock</i>
5 March 1846	Sarah Ann	John Stainer and Maria Stainer formerly <i>Dufal</i> .

The marriage of John Stainer to Maria *Lock*, widow (daughter of Thomas *Dufall*) was traced in the records for the year 1840 at Somerset House.

v. Is the Correct Age Always Stated In A Marriage Record?

In the marriage record of Sanderson Gifford his age is stated as follows:

Registration District of Shaftesbury
 Married in parish of Ashmore, Dorset.
 Sanderson Gifford aged 21 years and
 Sarah Stainer, age not shown in record.
 Married 23 April 1846.

In the 1851 Census record (taken five years after above marriage), Sanderson Gifford is stated to be aged 34 years and his wife 25 years. According to the census record, he was aged 29 years at the time of his marriage in 1846. In numerous instances it has been found that "age 21 years" given on marriage records is not an indication of an exact age, but a method whereby it is shown that the person concerned was "of legal age" or "of full age," such an age in

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE

Given at the **GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON.**

Application Number **84383 (G.S.691)**

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		DORCHESTER AND OSNEY	
1940 Marriage solemnized at the Dorford Chapel in the District of Dorchester & Osney in the County of Dorset			
1. Name and surname	2. Age	3. Condition	4. Rank or profession, Residence at the time of marriage, Father's name, and surname, Rank or profession of father
John Steiner	of full age	Bachelor	Horse Keeper St. Peters Dorchester
William Steiner Baker			
2. Name and surname	3. Age	4. Condition	5. Rank or profession, Residence at the time of marriage, Father's name, and surname, Rank or profession of father
Marie Lock	of full age	Widow	St. Peters Dorchester
Thomas Duffell Post Boy			
Married on the Dorford Chapel according to the rites and ceremonies of the Baptists by the Charles Evans Minister John Petty Aldridge Registrar			
The mark of John Steiner in the presence of The mark of Marie Lock Jane x x			

This marriage may be proved by the original entry.

Surname Indiscernable

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Marriages in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON, under the Seal of the said Office, the 6th day of March 1952

MA 161513



CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

Given at the **GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON.**

Application Number **89745 (G.S.797)**

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		DORCHESTER AND OSNEY	
1940 BIRTH in the Sub-District of Dorchester in the County of Dorset			
1. Name and Where Born	2. Name, if any	3. Sex	4. Name and Surname of Father
Tenth of March 1941 Saint Peter Dorchester	Elizabeth	Girl	John Stayner
5. Name and Maiden Surname of Mother	6. Rank or Profession of Father	7. Signature, Description and Residence of Informant	8. When Received
Marie Stayner late Lock formerly Duffell	Outler	The mark x of Marie Stayner mother Dorchester	Twenty third of March 1941
9. Signature of Registrar	10. Signature of Registrar	11. Signature of Registrar	12. Signature of Registrar
George Cull Registrar	George Cull Registrar	George Cull Registrar	George Cull Registrar

This marriage may be proved by the original entry.

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON, under the Seal of the said Office, the 18th day of March 1952

BA 980719



CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

Given at the **GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON.**

Application Number **87465 (G.S.611)**

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		BARNHAM & PURBECK	
1940 BIRTH in the Sub-District of Barnham in the County of Dorset			
1. Name and Where Born	2. Name, if any	3. Sex	4. Name and Surname of Father
Fifth of March 1940 in the Parish of Saint Mary Barnham	Sarah Ann	Female	John Steiner
5. Name and Maiden Surname of Mother	6. Rank or Profession of Father	7. Signature, Description and Residence of Informant	8. When Received
Marie Steiner formerly Duffell	Labourer	The mark x of Marie Steiner mother Hill Lane Barnham	Tenth of March 1940
9. Signature of Registrar	10. Signature of Registrar	11. Signature of Registrar	12. Signature of Registrar
Wm. Barnham Registrar	Wm. Barnham Registrar	Wm. Barnham Registrar	Wm. Barnham Registrar

This marriage may be proved by the original entry.

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON, under the Seal of the said Office, the 15th day of August 1952

BA 876772



England and Wales being 21 years and upwards. The examination of a number of original parish registers has shown that some clergymen have recorded ages of "21" for page after page, with an occasional "minor" appearing. As all the persons concerned were not exactly 21 years of age at marriage, the conclusion is that in these cases "21" means of "full or legal" age. However, herein also is a trap for the unwary. As the applicant for a certified copy of an entry cannot see the entries for several pages either side of the entry copied, it is difficult to assess whether the age of "21" is the actual age or the use of a lazy method for recording.

vi. Is The Name Of The Father Stated On A Marriage Record Always Correct?

In the majority of cases the name of the father, as shown on a marriage entry, is correct. However, there are cases where errors occur:—

- a. 11 July 1855 at St. Martins-in-the-Fields, Liverpool, Henry Gardner (spelled in the entry as *Gardener*) married Margaret Caldwell. She is described as the daughter of *Patrick* Caldwell, a farmer. Her record of birth shows that she is the daughter of *Archibald* Caldwell, and he was living for many years following the marriage of his daughter. There is no doubt that she is the daughter of *Archibald*, and the name *Patrick* is unknown in the family. The parish clerk misspelled the surname *Gardener* and undoubtedly wrongly recorded the name of Margaret's father. After all, this was her wedding day, and the record as written may have escaped her notice as she signed the register. (See Plate III).
- b. In the marriage entry dated 28 January 1839, in Essex, Joseph D..... is described as the son of James D..... Joseph later made a personal record of his origin, stating that his father was a man of another name and surname. The christening record of Joseph revealed that he was born out of wedlock, a son of Lucy D..... She was the daughter of James D....., therefore it would appear that at the time of the marriage in 1839, Joseph D..... gave the name of his grandfather for his father. Perhaps he wished to avoid embarrassment.

In some cases it is known that the names of brothers have been given, as well as some names being invented for insertion in the marriage entry. In a few instances the name of a woman has been inserted in the column of the marriage entry reserved for the fathers' names. This would undoubtedly seem to indicate illegitimacy.

1865. Marriage solemnized at *Marina, Cheshire, in the Parish of Liverpool in the County of Lancaster*

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
3864	July 11th	Henry Gardener	21	Bachelor	Mariner	3rd Street, James Gardner's Office, Calver.		
		Margaret Caldwell	21	Spinster		3rd Street, Patrick Caldwell's Farmer.		

REGISTRATION DISTRICT LIVERPOOL

1870. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church in the Parish of Liverpool in the County of Lancaster								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
173	4th January 1870	Angus Caldwell	full	Bachelor	Mariner	Scotland Rd.	Archibald Caldwell	Mariner
		Margaret Cowan	Minor	Spinster	—	Everton	Adam Cowan	Fireman

Married in the Parish Church	according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the	Established Church	by Licence
This Marriage was solemnized	in the Presence of	Minister Robert	J. Gallagher Esq. Off. Min.

PLATE III. Example of incorrect recording. Margaret Caldwell is a full sister to Angus Caldwell, legitimate children of Archibald Caldwell.

- c. Occasionally, the surname of the father, as given in a marriage entry, is distinctly different from that of the person being married. For instance, in a marriage of 1881 which took place in Nottinghamshire, Jacob B..... was shown as son of Joseph W..... This was the correct name of the father, for Jacob was born out of wedlock and received the surname B..... from his mother.
- d. It must be understood that one must not confuse patronymics with illegitimacy. Patronymics are used by families in Wales and among the Jews, as well as among other foreign nations. In the marriage of 1840 which took place in the Ffestiniog District of North Wales, David Peters is described as the son of Peter Hughes. David was the legitimate son of Peter Hughes, but adopted the first given name of his father as a surname. In South Wales, Mary Jones adopted the surname Jones from her father's name of Lazarus John. Care must be taken in all instances of an unusual recording to be sure that the correct conclusion is made.

vii. *Why Is The Name Of The Father Sometimes Missing From A Marriage Record?*

Since 1st July 1837 provision has been made in the records of marriages for the insertion of the name and occupation of the father of the person being married. When the name of the father was omitted, there was probably a good reason. Here are some cases which have been investigated:—

- a. Usually the name of the father was omitted when the person being married was unable to state the name. The person may not know the name, or the person may have been born out of wedlock and the clergyman or registrar recording the marriage deemed it advisable to omit the information. Perhaps there was no legal evidence that the name given (if such name or names were given) was actually the father. However many of the reasons in such cases may have long been forgotten.
- b. Some children, born legitimately do not know the names of their fathers, so the column may be left blank.
- c. A marriage record was obtained that showed that on 24 December 1842, David Morgans married Jane Lewis at the Tabernacle Chapel of the Baptists, Merthyr Tydfil, Glamorganshire. The columns describing the names and occupations of the fathers contain no information.

Yet, family records show that both persons were legitimately born, and research confirmed that David Morgans was born 4 March 1817 son of John Morgan by his wife, Sarah. Also that Jane Lewis was born 4 June 1823 and christened 27 July 1823 daughter of Alexander Lewis by

his wife, Mary. Research also revealed that both of the fathers were living at the date of the marriage in 1842. The father, *John Morgan*, died 17 May 1861 aged 68 years and the other father, *Alexander Lewis*, died 21 October 1858 aged 62 years.

It would seem that the officiating minister, and the attending registrar at this Nonconformist Chapel, did not bother to record the names of the fathers but left the information out of the record. This is not an isolated instance but has been found to have occurred in other marriage entries.

viii. Is The Father Still Living If Not Marked Deceased?

In the records of marriages there are two columns, numbered 7 and 8. One is for the names of the father and the other for the occupation of the father. In an effort to arrive at a conclusion, several hundred marriage records were examined. It would seem that some clergymen and registrars had a variety of interpretations as to what should be recorded in these two columns. Here are a few examples of what may be found:—

	(7) Father's name and surname	(8) Rank or profession of father
(a)	John Brown	Master Mariner
(b)	Philip Smith	Accountant

	(7) Father's name and surname	(8) Rank or profession of father
(c)	Jacob Gates	Attorney at law (deceased)
(d)	Septimus Livesey

	(7) Father's name and surname	(8) Rank or profession of father
(e)	John Smith	Miner
(f)

Every case must be examined carefully, for it must not be assumed that because the father is *not* marked deceased that he is living at the date of the marriage of his child. It may be supposed that a lot depends upon the questions asked

by the person who registered the marriage. The entry for a marriage does not ask whether the father is living or dead. Unless the question arises as to parental permission to marry for those who are under legal age, it may be that the whereabouts of a person's father may never be questioned. The father *may* be dead at the time of a marriage, even though such information is not recorded. In item "d", it would seem likely that the occupation was left blank because the father was dead, but then even this supposition must be carefully examined.

ix. *Is The Stated Marital Status of Single Or Widowed Persons Always Correct?*

In practically all instances the statement as to marital status is correct. There are other cases, however, which may be misleading. Persons who have been granted a divorce have, at the time of the subsequent marriage, been described as a *bachelor*. Although divorces were possible, until the present century very few of the middle and working classes obtained divorces in the divorce court. The procedure, and high cost usually made divorces prohibitive to the people at large. Because the personal affairs of many families are confidential and are often conveniently forgotten, many confusing and conflicting records are found, some of which are often very difficult to reconcile. The example treated here is very unusual, but in order to reveal the intricate life of the subject, several hundred birth, marriage, and death certificates had to be obtained from the Registrar General in order to pick out the ones relating to this person.

Henry Herman S..... was married on 2 May 1839, and described as a bachelor. This was undoubtedly his first marriage. A child of this marriage was born in June 1842 and duly registered. Henry married a second time on the 13 May 1842. (Note the date in comparison with his child's birth.) In his second marriage he was described as a bachelor; and children were born to this union and duly registered as legitimate in the years 1843, 1846, 1849, and 1851. This second wife died on the 27 May 1852. Henry then married for a third time, 17 November 1853, being described as a widower. To this third marriage children were duly registered in 1854, 1856, 1858, and 1862. During this time he married a fourth time, on 16 July 1855, being described as a widower. No children were traced for this fourth marriage.

The death record of the *first wife* was traced, stating she died 6 October 1859 (note the date), she was described

as "*widow* of Henry." Henry was traced in the records of the 1861 census as residing with his third wife. The death record of his fourth wife was traced which stated she died 13 July 1871.

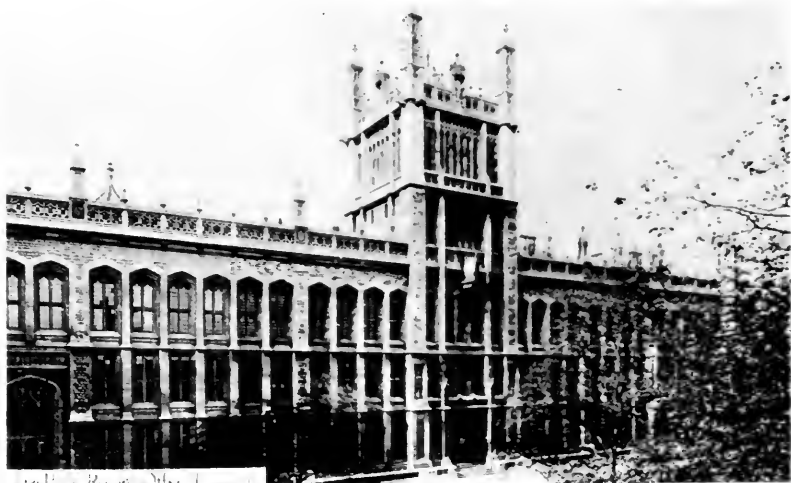
If mixed-up lives like these are at all common, small wonder it is that genealogists are prone to make mistakes, and how easy it is to come to a wrong conclusion, or give up the task as hopeless without taking into consideration other possibilities.

Chapter Six

THE CENSUS RECORDS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

The census returns are a great boon to genealogists. They were compiled by the order of the government. These records provide important eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth century genealogical facts that are invaluable. If the persons being sought were living at the time of the census, taken in 1841, or any later census, then additional clues may be found by searching these records.

By 1750 attempts were made to have a census taken, but it was not until 1801 that the first enumerators were sent out. The returns for 1801, 1811, 1821, and 1831 for England and Wales, are of no genealogical value because no names of householders or families appear, but only the number of persons resident in each house. The original purpose of taking a census was to provide statistics on the number of persons living in the country and to ascertain the



increase and decrease of population in certain areas. Later, other statistics were gathered, such as types of employment, ages, birthplaces, whether deaf, dumb or blind.

I. The 1841 Census

The first census of any genealogical value is that taken on the night of 7th June 1841. A census has been taken every ten years since then, except in 1941. In 1841, the information recorded included the names of every person in each house the night the census was taken, together with the names of those persons engaged at their labor during the night and regularly returning to their homes next morning. No members of a family, who visited and slept away from home, were included with their family at the home address. At hotels, lodging houses, institutions (such as hospitals), and aboard ships in harbors and canals, the person in charge of such a place filled out the census schedule forms from information supplied by the persons dwelling there that night. Persons living in tents, and other transients were also listed.

The census records for 1841, which are now available, are copies of the original schedules received from each dwelling, and are written for the most part in pencil, and the writing is faint in places. There are no relationships shown between individuals residing in a household, and birthplaces are not stated. Here is a record taken at Great Dover Street, Newington (London), Surrey, showing all persons living in one house:—

Mary Saunders	55	Ind.	N
Mary Ann Saunders	24	Stationer	N
/ Caroline Saunders	20	Governess	Y
Ann Shreckstone	50	Ind.	N
Rebecca Gregory	55	bonnet mkr.	Y
Jane Gregory	30		Y
Emma Gregory	20		Y
/ Harriet Gregory	16		Y
Ann Colley	50	Ind.	Y
Mary Wall	20	F. S.	Y
// George Whiting	25	J.	N

The following explanations will help indicate more about the above persons. The mark / after Caroline Saunders means that is the end of one family in the house. A similar

mark appearing after any person's name shows the end of a family, and the two marks // mean the end of the names of all persons in the one house. Therefore, above is the record of one house containing three families.

In the 1841 census it was the rule to record the ages of persons 15 years or younger correctly, but for persons 15 years and older, the last term of five years in which the age falls was to be recorded. For example, for persons aged 15, and under 20, the age shown was 15 years; for persons 20, and under 25, the age to be recorded as 20. Occasionally the enumerator showed the exact ages. The enumerator's instructions were to record only the first given name of every person, so that a child named *Mary Ann* may be shown as *Mary*, occasionally as *Ann*, and sometimes as *M.A.*

In the column indicating where the individuals were born, the information was restricted. If born in the county of residence, the letter "Y," or the word "Yes," was inserted, but if not born in the same county of residence, the letter "N," or the word "No," was inserted. If born in Scotland, the letter "S," or if in Ireland the letter "I," or if in foreign parts, the letter "F," was to be inserted. However, in the census records of Scotland, Ireland, the Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands, persons recorded there who were born in England or Wales are described in the record as born "E."

Among the abbreviations used will be found "Ind." for a person of independent means; "N. K." for not known, such as birthplace not being known; "F. S." and "M. S." meaning female and male servant. "J" means a journeyman, or a tradesman who travels in pursuit of his occupation. Occupations are often abbreviated and these are too numerous to list here. Among the most common are *Agr.* and *Ag. lab.* (agricultural laborer) and *F.W.K.* (frame work knitter).

The 1841, and later, census records were enumerated by schoolmasters, clergymen, business people, and others who had some education and could read and write, who obtained information from all classes of people, some educated, as well as from many who could not spell, or read or write. Persons often spoke a dialect, and, if they were residing away from their native parishes, could very easily be misunderstood.

One of the authors of this book served as an enumerator for one of the recent censuses. The present procedure is to

leave the blank schedule form at each house, to be filled in by the head of the house on the night of the census. A few days later these are collected, and only a very few people, mostly elderly, or blind, usually need assistance. There is no doubt that false statements do occur where families do not wish to disclose personal matters. It is surprising the number of people who are suspicious of government enquiries, and for this reason the information written in census records is treated as confidential. One can well imagine the difficulties encountered by the government officials when the first census records were taken, as also when the first parish registers were ordered to be kept.

In the 1841 census, the returns are compiled in parishes, and are in bound books stored in boxes known as *bundles*, which are available to the public for searching at the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. 2. on the production of a previously obtained reader's ticket or permit. The Public Record Office has an index of the places, and tracing the call number of the bundle of books containing the 1841 census returns of any particular parish is usually quite easy. The 1841 census records for England and Wales have not been microfilmed.

When searching the census records, it may be that the sex is not easily indicated by the name. For instance a badly written Francis (a male) may be read as Frances (a female), and the interchangeable names used for both female and male, like Vivian, Evelyn, Julian, Christian, Marian, Dennis, Phillip, and possibly many others, may cause trouble. Sometimes only initials are given; like M. A. Jones. In the 1841 and 1851 census records, columns are provided for the stating of ages, and the age column for females is separate from that of males. If there is any doubt as to the sex of any person listed in the census, one should carefully check the age column to determine whether male or female, and make careful note of the sex stated.

II. The 1851 Census

This census was taken on the night of 30th March 1851, using similar methods as described for the 1841 census, so that no one would be missed. The returns are copies of the schedules received from each dwelling place, bound into books and stored in boxes known as *bundles*. The parishes

are arranged by sub-districts and districts coinciding with the districts of the registrars of births, marriages and deaths throughout the country. The records are mostly written in ink on blue paper. The 1851 census returns contain additional facts of great importance not found in the 1841 census. The enumerators were to obtain the name, marital status, actual age, occupation and birthplace of each person in every household, and to state the relationship of each person to the head of the house, such as whether a wife, son, daughter, father, lodger, visitor or any other possible connection. The birthplace recorded was to include the name of the county and place, if born in England and Wales, and the names of the country, if born elsewhere.

The 1851 census is now being microfilmed for the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah, but this project may not be completed for some years. There is no charge for personally searching these microfilms. The original records are also available, without charge to the public, at the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. 2., but a reader's ticket or permit has to be obtained prior to applying for the records. At either of these places, if one cannot attend personally, he has to employ someone else to make the searches. Information on how to find the census record of any particular parish is given in Chapter 7, "*How to Trace Place and Family in the 1841 and 1851 Census Records.*"

III. The 1861 and Later Census Records.

The records of the 1861 Census, and also those taken every ten years since, are not available at the present time. They are considered to be confidential documents and cannot be searched personally either by the public or an agent. The Registrar General, General Register Office, Somerset House, Strand, London, W.C. 2., England, has them in his custody. Upon written application he may make a search for a particular family said to be residing at a given address which must be supplied by the applicant. In order to obtain such an address, the following methods may be used:—

- i. The *Directory* of any city, town, or county may supply the address of a family listed therein.
- ii. Family documents or old letters may still have addresses of the family concerned, sufficient to identify the residence.

- iii. Application may be made to have a certified copy of an entry of birth, marriage, or death issued by the Registrar General which may supply an address sufficient for the purpose of tracing the family in the census records. Such a document already in one's possession may be used.

The applicant must state the address precisely, the name and surname of the person or persons said to be residing there, and must make the declaration that the information from the census will not be used for litigation. The fee of ten shillings (or \$1.50 at the present exchange rate) must be prepaid, and covers the search of one address for one family. These later census returns give substantially the same information as that given in the 1851 census. It is to be hoped that the 1861 census returns may be made available to the public, but it is not known when that may be. It is important to know the dates when each census was taken. They were taken on:—

7 June	1841	8 April	1861
31 March	1851	3 April	1871

One may judge the importance of knowing these dates. If the ancestor died on the 1st April 1871, he would not appear in the census taken two days later, the 3rd April, although his next of kin may appear at the address of death.

An unfortunate problem also arises in research when the person being traced died a short time before the 1851 census. It means that the searcher is robbed of the valuable information the census would have shown—the age at the time, and most important, the place of birth. Such a situation also applies to those who immigrated to the United States and other places prior to the census, or if they were absent from their homes the night the census was taken.

The following examples are typical of the 1841, 1851, and 1861 original census records.

The 1841 census, Bundle 317 book 15
Parish of Long Newton, in the County of Durham.

Matthew	Newby	40	M.S.	Yes
Mary	do	35		Yes
Hannah	do	15		Yes
Matthew	do	10		Yes
Mary	do	8		Yes
John	do	6		Yes
William	do	4		Yes
Joseph	do	1		Yes

Parish or Township of	Electoral District of	City or Township of	County	Village of
Name of Street, Place, or Road, and Name or No. of House	Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 30th March, 1851; H of all of Family	Age	Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born
41	Wanushawen	aged 21	in paper	Leicester School
42	William Wigniter	head man 47	brick maker	Leicester School
	Betha W.	33	do do wife	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
43	William Wigniter	head man 47	in paper	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	33	do do	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
44	James Wigniter	head man 47	in paper	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	33	do do	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
45	Wynken W.	head man 47	in paper	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	33	do do	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
46	Wynken W.	head man 47	in paper	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	33	do do	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
	Wynken W.	11	do do	Leicester School
Total	11	11	11	11

PLATE I. Reduced facsimile of a page from the 1851 Census of Long Newton. (Used by permission.)

Notice that relationships are not mentioned, that the ages given are in terms of five years, and that the person heading the family is given as "M.S." meaning a "male servant" by occupation. If the ages shown are according to the rule, then Matthew was 40 to 44 years of age, Mary between 35 and 39, Hannah between 15 and 19.

It must never be assumed that such a household, with what may appear to be a father, mother, and a group of children born in regular order are actually related in that way. In this case, other sources were used, and it was found that the above persons were a regular family. Sometimes a niece or nephew of the head of the family may be residing with the family, or perhaps the youngest by age may be a grandchild or a visitor with the same surname. Occasionally a child born out of wedlock to one of the daughters of the family may appear under the same surname.

Ten years later the above family was still resident in Long Newton parish. The following is a condensed version of the enumeration (See Plate I):

<i>Names and Surnames</i>		<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Ages</i>	<i>Occupations</i>	<i>Where Born</i>		
Matthew	Newby	Head, Marr.	54	Innkeeper	Long	Newton,	Durham
Mary	do	wife, do	52		West	Auckland,	do
Ann	do	dau. Unmd.	26		Long	Newton,	do
Mary	do	dau.	18		do	do	do
William	do	son	14		do	do	do
Joseph	do	son	11		do	do	do

Note that the "head" of the household is listed first, then all the other persons in the house that night are shown with their relationship to the head of the house. It must not be assumed that they bear exactly the same relationship to the wife as to the "head" because he may have been married several times, and the present wife is not necessarily the mother of the daughters and sons or related to other persons who may be in the household. In this census the actual age was recorded, and the most important statement is often that of the actual place of birth. A comparison between the foregoing 1841 and 1851 census records shows that in 1841 there was a person in the family named *Matthew*, aged 10 years, who was not with the family in 1851. Between 1841 and 1851 he may have died, moved away to work, or perhaps he married and still lived in the immediate locality.

The supposition that he married is supported by the finding in the same parish, a census schedule as follows:—

		Age		where Born
Matthew Newby	Head, mar.	19	Agric. labr.	Long Newton, Durham
Mary do	wife, mar.	23		Ormesby, Durham
Ann do	dau.	6 mos.		Ormesby, Durham
Ann Hind	mother-in-law, wid.	52		Woton, Beds.

Bearing in mind that most of the working class a century or more ago could neither read nor write, it can be expected that unintentional errors would occur as householders gave the details verbally to the enumerator. For instance, the age of *fifty-two* given by word of mouth may be mis-heard and written as *sixty-two*. Names of places are also occasionally written phonetically or incorrectly. Note what occurs in the record of the above family in the 1861 census, which record was obtained by correspondence with the Registrar General, Somerset House, London:—

1861 Census of High Street, Long Newton, Durham

		Age		Where Born
Matthew Newby	Head, Mar.	30	Drainer	Long Newton, Durham
Mary do	wife, Mar.	30		Hornsby, Yorks
Ann do	dau.	10	scholar	Long Newton, Durham
Matthew do	son	8		do do
Susan do	dau.	6		do do
William do	son	3		do do
Mary do	dau.	1		do do

It will be observed that in 1851 Mary Newby is given as aged 23, and born in *Ormesby*, and that in 1861 she is given as 30, and born in *Hornsby*. In North Yorkshire there is a place named *Ormesby* very close to another place named *Hornby*, but the enumerator wrote down what he heard, and it would appear that Mary also conveniently reduced her age as she grew older!

A record of a household from the 1841 census cannot be assumed to be that of one family without harmonizing evidence. The following enumeration appears in the 1841 census of Winwick, Northamptonshire:—

Bundle 451, Book 13.

James	Gurney	35	ag. labr.	Y
Sarah	do	30		Y
George	do	13		Y
Gabriel	do	13		Y
Charlotte	do	11		Y

From the above record, a family was incorrectly compiled as parents and three children. The parish registers had been searched back from about 1813 to the earliest dates, but no one had bothered to search them from 1813 to beyond 1851. This often happens in genealogies of families who are over-anxious to trace their pedigree back to early dates rather than making sure each family in each generation is complete as the pedigree is developed. In this particular instance the parish registers of Winwick, Northants; tell the story of the persons shown in the above census records.

Winwick Parish Registers, Northamptonshire

Chr. 4 Nov. 1827—Gabriel son of Arthur and Elizabeth Gurney.

Chr. 22 Feb. 1829—Charlotte dau of Arthur and Elizabeth Gurney.

Bur. 14 June 1829—Arthur Gurney, aged 30 years.

Chr. 7 May 1799—Arthur son of Benjamin Gurney and his wife Mary (formerly Arthur).

Chr. 12 May 1803—James son of the same parents.

It is clear that in the 1841 census record, the children Gabriel and Charlotte are not the children of James and Sarah Gurney, but are the children of James' brother, Arthur, who died in 1829. There is good reason for them to be residing with their uncle in 1841.

If the surname of the family concerned is common, care should be taken to make sure that any census enumeration is actually the record of the family being sought. Particularly in Wales this is a problem, with such common surnames as *Jones, Williams, Thomas*. In England there are many common names like *Smith, Brown, or Robinson*, to mention only a few. Even where the surname is less common, it is wise to prove every assumption.

To illustrate this point, the Enderby family in the ancestry of Mrs. Conway Ashton is of interest.

The records of the family show that William Enderby and his wife, Elizabeth, were the parents of several children born at Binbrook, Lincolnshire. Birth certificates from Somerset House disclosed that several children were born at Binbrook between 1840 and 1847. The 1841 census of Binbrook, Lincolnshire, showed the record of the family which agreed with facts already known:—

1841 Census, Main Street, Binbrook St. Gabriel, Lincs.

William Enderby	30	Shoemaker	Y
Elizabeth do	30		Y
Eliza do	9		Y
Fanny do	8		Y
Margaret do	5		Y
Timothy do	3		Y
Louisa do	7 months		Y

The 1851 census records of Binbrook were then searched, but the above family was not traced. There was reason to search the surrounding parishes on the assumption that the family had moved to another locality, perhaps for better employment. The vital information as to the correct ages and birthplaces of the parents, William and Elizabeth Enderby, was needed. It was essential to trace the 1851 census record of this family. Accordingly, in ever-widening circles around Binbrook, *sixty-one* parishes were searched. The only record of a William Enderby and family was that traced in the 1851 census of Kirmond-le-Mire as follows:—

1851 Census, Parish of Kirmond-Le-Mire, Lincs.

				<i>Birthplace</i>	
William Enderby	Head Marr.	42	Agr. labr.	Binbrook	Lincs.
Elizabeth do	wife	38		Beckingham,	Notts.
George do	son	13		Binbrook,	Lincs.
Harriet do	dau	8		do	do
Eliza do	dau	9		do	do

This is the enumeration of a family with an uncommon surname, and the only one in the locality likely to fit the requirements. Comparisons between the family shown in the 1841 record and that of the 1851 record disclose such discrepancies as follows:

- i. The 1841 census shows Elizabeth as 30 to 34 years of age, born in the county of Lincoln, whereas the 1851 census shows an Elizabeth as age 38 born in Nottinghamshire. Perhaps this may be an indication that the first Elizabeth died, and William married a second person with the same first given (christian) name.
- ii. William Enderby in 1841 is a shoemaker, but in 1851 the man is an agricultural laborer.
- iii. The children shown in 1841 are not shown with this family in 1851. George age 13 in 1851 is not shown with the family of 1841.

The family had already received details of christenings from the parish registers, and the parish minister claimed that there was one christening only for a William Enderby around 1809, viz:—

Chr: 20 April 1809 William the son of William and Mary Enderby.

It would seem that there were two men, both named William Enderby, or else the 1841 and 1851 census records referred to the same man. The living descendant, taking an active interest in the research, could trace no children by the names of Harriet and Eliza in the old family records, but it is not uncommon to trace the records of forgotten children, and so unmentioned, in family records. Years ago the family had accepted the christening dated 20 April 1809 for its ancestor William Enderby, but the question now arose as to whether the man in the 1851 census aged 42 years, was another man of the same name, and consequently conflicting with the pedigree.

Relatives still living in England were contacted by the American descendants. After several letters, it was learned from a second cousin residing in Hull, Yorkshire, that his particular Enderby family had variously lived in Hull and Grimsby around the year 1851.

A letter was written to the superintendent registrar of the register office at Hull. He performed valuable assistance in searches for the death records of William Enderby and his wife, Elizabeth. As no information was in the family records as to when they died, this was a long search, covering deaths which took place since 1841. Records of death were traced for William Enderby in 1878, and Elizabeth Enderby in 1883, that had the appearance of being likely to refer to William and Elizabeth Enderby. However, since in previous research wrong death records had already been issued, these newly-found documents were mailed to the relatives in England. The relatives recognized the informants who registered the deaths as close relatives, so they were now acceptable. Searches were fruitlessly made of the 1871 and 1861 census records of the places of death. It was decided that although the population was very large, a search would have to be made of all the 1851 census records from Grimsby, Lincolnshire, and for Hull, and Sculcoates, in Yorkshire. Finally, in the returns for Hull, the family was traced as follows:

1851 Census of 10 Crown Court, Dock Street, Hull, Yorks.

				Birthplace
William Enderby	Head	Marr.	42	Bootbinder Binbrook, Lincs.
Elizabeth do	wife		44	Grimsby, do
Charlotte do	dau		8	Binbrook, do
Olive do	dau		6	do do
Matilda do	dau		4	do do
George do	son		1	Scotherne, do
Elizabeth J. do	dau		18	Binbrook, do

The above family agrees with details of the 1841 census, with birth records of some of the children, with the occupation of the father, and clearly is the family being sought. The child, George, aged 1 year, does not appear in the old family records, so he probably died young and was forgotten. The certificate of birth was obtained for the child Olive Enderby, born 27 April 1845, and aged six years in the 1851 census. This showed that she was born in the village of Binbrook St. Gabriel, Lincolnshire.

It is interesting to note that two men named William Enderby appear in the 1851 census, both the same age of 42 years, and both described as born in the little parish of Binbrook, Lincolnshire. The christening entry, submitted by the Rector of St. Mary and St. Gabriel, Binbrook, for 20 April 1809, could be accepted for *either* one of them, unless some careful attention is given to the problem. If there were two men and but one christening, where was the record of the christening of the other?

As a check on the search made by the parish minister, the bishop's transcripts for Binbrook, kept at Lincoln, were next searched. The following entry which was not submitted by the minister was traced:—

Chr: 26 December 1808, William, son of John and Frances Enderby.

The entry sent by the minister was dated 20 April 1809, relating to William, son of William and Mary Enderby.

Which of these two entries relates to William Enderby the shoemaker who lived in Hull 1851, and is the direct ancestor, is another problem. However, this example serves to demonstrate:—

- i. The danger of jumping to quick conclusions from information in the census returns without weighing carefully all the facts.

- ii. The importance of families taking an interest in the research so that they can assist in detecting such problems, and if necessary, obtaining by correspondence with relatives, additional supplementary details.
- iii. The value of the services of superintendent registrars when no clear guide as to the date of the death of a person is available.
- iv. The comparison of parish registers with bishop's transcripts.

Chapter Seven

HOW TO TRACE PLACE AND FAMILY IN THE 1841 AND 1851 CENSUS RECORDS

THERE is no surname index to persons listed in the census returns. The families recorded are in the order of houses visited by the enumerator. The reasons why the census returns should be consulted are:

A. Persons commencing research in the records of the nineteenth century, need facts that were stated personally by their ancestors. The 1841 census is of value by showing household groups; but the 1851 and later census records show facts about birthplaces and relationships which are extremely valuable and should never be neglected.

B. Preliminary work in the census returns is often followed by extensive parish register and other research, but by referring back to the census enumerations, many additional details may be found, among which are the following:

a. The parish registers might have given ancestral families whose daughters changed their surname by marriage. The 1841 and 1851 census records may show complete or partial families of these couples, supplying ages, birthplaces, and other important information.

b. Appearing in the census records may be children whose births were not registered in the locality of usual residence, or registered in some obscure nonconformist chapel or perhaps not registered.

c. Members of families who had married elsewhere, and others who had at one time resided in another place, may have returned to their locality of origin, sometimes bringing with them families born in distant places.

d. Conflicting issues of the identification of families traced in other records may be resolved by the evidence found in census returns.

Assuming that the name of the parish is known, how does one use the 1851 census records?

A. The search can be made in the original records at the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London, W. C. 2., by any person who has obtained a reader's permit. In that case, the officials in charge will assist the visitor to find the appropriate books of census returns relating to the parish concerned.

B. To search the microfilm copies of the 1851 census returns at the Library, The Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City 1, Utah, it is wise to become acquainted with the details given in this chapter.

C. Do not travel to Salt Lake City solely to search the 1851 census returns without first enquiring whether the census of the locality concerned is available. The microfilming has been in progress since 1948, but up to the end of 1956 less than half the work has been accomplished.

D. Be sure of the facts and know what is required. Unless well planned, searches in the census returns may not produce the desired results. For instance, if the search is in its initial stage, it may be more important to obtain certain records of births, marriages, or deaths, before using the census records.¹ *This is very important.*

E. Make sure of the name of the place to be searched. If it is not a parish, it is essential to determine the name of the parish in which it is situated. Verify the name of the county in which the place is said to be situated, as there are many small places which bear the same names. The best aid in determining these facts is Lewis's *Topographical Dictionaries*.²

As the microfilm copy of the 1851 census, when completed, will cover thousands of parishes and other smaller places, it is impractical for the Genealogical Society to make a catalogue card for each parish. Insofar as the microfilm copy is available, there are two distinct places in the Library Reading Room where it is a catalogued:

- (i) The *English General File* and the *Welsh General File*, catalogue the 1851 census records in a general way. Under the word *Census* appears a listing of registration district numbers and the names of the sub-districts, but no references are given to the names of the parishes contained in the districts.
- (ii) The Genealogical Society is preparing alphabetical lists showing the name of each parish with its townships. These lists constitute a simple method of determining by page numbers where on the microfilm the record of any particular parish appears, together with the Library call number for that particular record.
 - a. *The 1851 Census of Wales and Monmouthshire.*
The microfilm copy of the 1851 Census of the

1. See Chapter 4, "Civil Registration of Births, Marriages, and Deaths.

2. Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (Several editions, commencing in 1831, London). This publication is in 4 volumes and contains information on the parishes in Monmouthshire.

A Topographical Dictionary of Wales (several editions, commencing in 1833 London).

Welsh Division is now available. An alphabetical list of all parishes³ in Wales and Monmouthshire is being made.

- b. *The 1851 Census of England.* The microfilming of the 1851 Census of England is in progress. As the microfilm copy of the census of each county becomes available, an alphabetical list of all parishes⁴ in each county is being made.

One must not expect to find any of these lists until after the microfilm becomes available and the Genealogical Society has had time to complete the alphabetical lists.

The following examples will help demonstrate the method of tracing place and family in the 1851 census records:—

I. Welsh Example.

Captain Thomas Davies recorded that he was born 1st April 1827 at Blaenpantery, Cardiganshire, the son of John Davies and his wife, Margaret Jones. No mention was found in either Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of Wales* or in a gazetteer, of Blaenpantery or a place of similar pronunciation. As family records showed that Captain Thomas Davies was married in Wales in 1848, application was made for a copy of his marriage certificate. This document showed that he was married 20 April 1848 in Cardiff, Glamorganshire, but that his residence at that time was Blaenpantarfi, Parish of Troedryaur, Cardiganshire, and that he was the son of John Davies, a butler. Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary* shows that Troedryaur is a parish four miles from Newcastle-Emlyn, and had a population in 1831 of 1,064. The map of Cardiganshire shows that Troedryaur is on the highway, and that the nearest parish is Bettws Evan. The place Blaenpantarfi or similar spelling is not shown on the map. The following is the procedure to trace the census records of Troedryaur parish:—

- i. Refer to the above mentioned book when available as this will show all parishes in alphabetical order, and it will be easy to turn to the letter "T" and find the reference to Troedryaur, Cardiganshire. Here is an example of how the parish reference will appear:

Parish	Part of Parish	County	Bundle Numbers	Page Numbers on Microfilm	Library Call Numbers
Troedryaur		Cards.	2482	372 to 413	F Wales 7. Part 63.

3. and 4. The definition of the word *parish* as mentioned here is based on the ancient ecclesiastical parish (See Chapter 10.).

From this information, one should now enter into the research notebook:—

“Troedryaur, Cardiganshire, see pages 372 to 413, on microfilm F. Wales 7 part 63.”

On the application slip to be handed to the library assistant, one now writes “F Wales 7 part 63.” Nothing else is necessary on the library slip, as this is the complete *call number*.

*Explanation of the “Bundle Numbers” and
“Page Numbers on Microfilm.”*

At the Public Record Office, London, England, the original census records are in bound volumes, filed in boxes (commonly called *bundles*), and a number is given to each bundle. This bundle number appears on the bottom of every page microfilmed. As the officials microfilmed the census records for the Genealogical Society, they numbered each double page at the top right-hand corner, beginning with the first page of the first book in each bundle and numbering consecutively through each book in the bundle to the end. These are the page numbers listed in the column “Page Numbers on Microfilm” in the projected reference books showing alphabetical lists of the parishes and other places.

The page numbers to which reference is made are those appearing at the top right-hand corners and not to any other page numbers which appear. (See Plates I and II, note the top right-hand corners.)

When the microfilm is placed on the reading machine, it is necessary to turn to the pages agreeing with the description found for Troedryaur parish, or commencing with page 372. The census returns for every parish are divided into small sections, and each represents an area covered by an enumerator as he visited each family to secure the details required by the government. Each of these small districts is preceded, in the census records, by a written description of that particular area. (See Plate I “Description of Enumeration District.”)

The balance of the pages in each section or “Enumeration District” contain the information concerning the families residing in that area on the night the census return was made. One reads first the pages headed, “Description of the Enumeration District,” and seeks mention of the place “Blaen-

DESCRIPTION OF ENUMERATION DISTRICT.					372
Locality and Parliamentary Division of	Within the limits of the Parliamentary Boundary of the City or Borough of	Within the Municipal Boundary of	Superficially Registered District	Registered District	No. of Enumeration District
<p><i>City of London</i></p> <p><i>Within the limits of the Parliamentary Boundary of the City of London</i></p> <p><i>Within the Municipal Boundary of</i></p> <p><i>Superficially Registered District</i></p> <p><i>Registered District</i></p> <p><i>No. of Enumeration District</i></p>					

PLATE 1. Part of the first page of the record of an area covered by an enumerator of the census. Note the description of the district he visited. Note the page number in the top right-hand corner (372). (Used by permission.)

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8

Household	Name and Surname of Head of Family	Name and Surname of Person who slept in household on the Night of the 30th March 1841	Sex	Age	Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born
1	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
2	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
3	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
4	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
5	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
6	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
7	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
8	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
9	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
10	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
11	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
12	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
13	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
14	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
15	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
16	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
17	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
18	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
19	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
20	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
21	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
22	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
23	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
24	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
25	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
26	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
27	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
28	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
29	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
30	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
31	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
32	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
33	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
34	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
35	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
36	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
37	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
38	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
39	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
40	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
41	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
42	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
43	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
44	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
45	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
46	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
47	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
48	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
49	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
50	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
51	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
52	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
53	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
54	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
55	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
56	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
57	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
58	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
59	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
60	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
61	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
62	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
63	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
64	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
65	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
66	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
67	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
68	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
69	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
70	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
71	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
72	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
73	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
74	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
75	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
76	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
77	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
78	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
79	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
80	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
81	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
82	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
83	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
84	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
85	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
86	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
87	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
88	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
89	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
90	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
91	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
92	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
93	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
94	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
95	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
96	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
97	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
98	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
99	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan
100	John J. B. B.	John J. B. B.	M	45		Bettws Evan

PLATE II. Part of a page taken from the household enumerations of the parish of Bettws Evan. Note the page number in the top right-hand corner of the page (431). In all research notes and quotations therefrom, this page number is the one to quote for future reference as to the source. (Used by permission.)

DESCRIPTION OF ENUMERATION DISTRICT.

County and Parliamentary Division of	Within the limits of the Parliamentary Boundary of the City or Borough of	Within the Municipal Boundary of	Superintendent Registrar's District	Registrar's District	No. of Enumeration District
Cardigan			North Wales	Cardigan	118

Description of Enumeration District.

All that part of the parish of Bettws Evan, Cardiganshire, showing mention of the place *Blanpantarf* which actually consists of a few scattered houses between the two parishes, Bettws Evan and Troeddyr. (Used by permission.)

PLATE III. Description of part of the parish of Bettws Evan, Cardiganshire, showing mention of the place *Blanpantarf* which actually consists of a few scattered houses between the two parishes, Bettws Evan and Troeddyr. (Used by permission.)

pantarfi," the place of residence of Captain Thomas Davies, or his father, John Davies, the butler, the subjects of this example. It will be noted (see Plate I) that Blaenpantarfi is not mentioned.

The film may now be turned to see if the place Blaenpantarfi is mentioned later, but in this case, no mention of such a place is to be found on the pages headed "Description of Enumeration District." It is now necessary to search the household enumerations carefully, but throughout the record for the parish of Troedryaur no mention is to be found of the Davies family being sought.

That a family is not to be found in a parish where it was formerly resident may be indicative of several things.

- i. The parents might have died and the family moved away.
- ii. The family moved away.
- iii. The place, Blaenpantarfi, may be an estate of some large landowner, and may overlap the boundaries of the small parish (Troedryaur) and extend into some neighboring parish.

It will be recalled that when the map was checked, the nearest parish noted was Bettws Evan. The reference book, already mentioned, indicates that Bettws Evan parish is on the same microfilm, F. WALES 7 part 63, on pages 414 to 432. The microfilm is now turned to page 414 and the pages headed, "Description of Enumeration District," for Bettws Evan are read. The description found on page 424 indicates that a place named Blanpantarfi is in that parish. (See Plate III.)

Reading through the household enumerations for this "Enumeration District" of the parish of Bettws Evan, there appears on page 431, the record of residents in a house named "Mountain," as follows: (See Plate II.)

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Mountain: John	Davies.	Head.	Mar. 53.	Farmer and Annuitant.	St. Mary, Cardigan
Margaret	Do	Wife	Mar 48		Newcastle Emlyn Card.
Evan	Do	Son	13	Scholar	Troedryaur, Cardigan
Mary	Do	Daur	9	Do	Do Do
Margaret	Do	Daur	5		Bettws Ev. Do
William	Do	Son	11	days	Do Do

5. The page number, on the top righthand corner of the double page of the census record, must be recorded in the research notebook. When compiling the material into the family record (or family group sheets), this page number, together with the Library Call Number of the film and the name of the parish, must be quoted as a source reference, in order to check the evidence at some future time.

Family records of Captain Thomas Davies show that he had a brother by the name of Evan Davies (mentioned in the census record quoted), and it will be noted that the census record shows that two of the children were born in Troed-yraur parish. A copy of the birth record of Mary Davies, age 9 in the 1851 census and therefore born in 1841 or 1842, was obtained. This showed that she was born in 1841 at Blaenpantarfi, Troed-yraur, and was the daughter of John Davies, a butler, by his wife, Margaret, formerly *Jones*, and proving that the family traced was the correct connection. Further proof was obtained by having a correspondent in London search the 1841 Census returns for Troed-yraur parish. The following information was found:

1841 Census of Troed-yraur, Cardiganshire.

Troed-yraur

House.	John Davies	Age about 40	M.S.	Yes
--------	-------------	--------------	------	-----

Blaenpantrefi.

Margaret Davies	35	Ind.	Yes
Thomas do	14		Yes
John do	11		Yes
Evan do	3		Yes
Mary do	1 month		Yes

In 1841 John Davies was a butler (a male servant), but it would seem that by the year 1851 he had retired on an annuity and had taken up a farm close by.

II. English Examples.

A. The records of the 1851 Census of England are the same as in the Welsh example, and the procedure is the same. If one were interested in tracing the records of the 1851 Census of Newchurch-in-Rossendale, Lancashire, it would be necessary to first check whether or not it was a parish. Lewis's *A Topographical Dictionary of England* describes it as follows:—

Newchurch-in-Rossendale, a chapelry in that part of the parish of Whalley . . . 3½ miles . . . from Haslingden, containing, with Bacup, Deadwin-Clough, Tunstead, and Wolfenden, 8557 inhabitants in 1831.

The map should then be checked, to familiarize oneself with the neighboring places. The same procedure, as noted in the previous example is followed:—

- i. The projected reference book, when available will show all parishes in alphabetical order and under the letter "W" one will trace the name of *Whalley*, and its township, Newchurch-in-Rossendale, which is as follows:

Parish	Township (if any)	Bundle Numbers	Page Numbers on Microfilm	Library Call Numbers
Whalley	Newchurch in Rossendale	2248	1 to 522	F. Eng. 14 Part 143
Whalley	Higher Booths	2249	1 to 128	F. Eng. 14 Part 144
Whalley	Lower Booths	2249	129 to 246	F. Eng. 14 Part 144

Whalley is an extensive parish, containing in 1851, 134,196 inhabitants, therefore one would not search the whole of Whalley parish, but only that part pertinent to the problem, which is, in this case, Newchurch-in-Rossendale. It had 16,925 inhabitants in 1851, or less than one-eighth of the population of the entire parish. A note would then be entered in the research notebook that Newchurch-in-Rossendale appears on pages 1 to 522 of the microfilm F. Eng. 14., part 143.

As indicated in the previous example, one enters the call number, F. Eng. 14., part 143, on a library call slip, and the library assistant will place the microfilm on a reading machine, so that the search could begin.

If a document, such as a birth, marriage, or death certificate, or a parish register entry, indicates that a family resided in the parish of Whalley, and that their specific address was Whalley (and not one of the other townships or villages in that large parish), it would be wise to first consider searching the census of Whalley Township, rather than commencing the search in other townships connected with that parish. For example, the projected alphabetical lists of parishes will show:—

Parish	Township (if any)	Bundle Numbers	Page Numbers on Microfilm	Library Call Numbers
WHALLEY	Mearley	2256	123 to 124	F. Eng. 14 Part 153
WHALLEY	Clitheroe	2256	125 to 346	F. Eng. 14 Part 153
WHALLEY	Pendleton	2256	347 to 392	F. Eng. 14 Part 153
WHALLEY	Wiswell	2256	393 to 422	F. Eng. 14 Part 153
WHALLEY	WHALLEY	2256	423 to 454	F. Eng. 14 Part 153
WHALLEY	Little Mitton	2256	455 to 460	F. Eng. 14 Part 153

The search would therefore be made in the census record for *Whalley Township* through the page numbers (423 to 454) as given in the reference book. If the family is not found in that particular record, then it might be necessary to make a wider search through the other townships.

Alternatively, if an address was in one of the other townships, one would not commence the search with *Whalley Township*, but would start the search in the record of the township in question.

B. There are many instances where a location within a parish or the parish itself may be divided into various districts, and appear in the census records in different microfilms. As an example, note the references for the parish of *Redmarshall*, County Durham.

Parish	Township (if any)	Bundle Numbers	Page Numbers on microfilms	Library Call Numbers
Redmarshall	Redmarshall	2383	26 to 28	F. Eng. 13 Part 2
Redmarshall	Carlton	2383	17 to 25	F. Eng. 13 Part 2
Redmarshall	Stillington	2384	694 to 696	F. Eng. 13 Part 4

Note that in 1851, *Redmarshall* parish had three divisions or townships: *Redmarshall Township* (population 76); *Carlton Township* (population 186); and *Stillington Township* (population 70). If a search were made of the microfilm containing the records of the townships of *Redmarshall* and *Carlton*, and omitted searching the microfilm for *Stillington*, such an error might be the cause for not finding the record being sought. In a problem centered in such a place as *Redmarshall* and its townships, one would enter in the research notebook, the following:

- Redmarshall) See *Redmarshall* on pages 26 to 28 of F.
- Co. Durham) Eng. 13 part 2.
-) See *Carlton* on pages 17 to 25 of F. Eng.
-) 13 part 2.
-) See *Stillington* on pages 694-696 of F. Eng.
- 13 part 4.

The procedure previously mentioned is followed through, searching the pages indicated in both microfilms. Then one may be certain to have covered the record of the entire parish or places concerned.

C. If the census of a large town or city has to be searched, it is always wise to attempt to find out, before the search is attempted, the name of the street or locality where the family resided. (This problem is dealt with in Chapter 8.)

It has already been mentioned that Lewis's *Topographical Dictionaries* are a valuable aid in determining the name of the parish in which smaller places are situated. However, these *Topographical Dictionaries* have their limitations, as they omit many small places.

In these cases, it will be necessary to refer to the official publication, *The 1851 Census of England and Wales*,⁶ available on the reference shelf of the Library Reading Room at the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City. The call number is R6A90 and includes eleven books. Each of these contains information about the places within the counties covered by that particular book. By checking the index in the appropriate book, a reference to a particular hamlet or village may be found, leading to the name of the township and parish in which it is situated.

6. "The Population Tables (of) England and Wales," *Census of Great Britain*, 1851, XI books, (London: H. M. Stationary Office, 1852).

Chapter Eight

STREET AND LOCALITY ADDRESSES IN THE 1851 CENSUS RETURNS

IT would be folly to spend many hours, and sometimes even days searching the 1851 census of a large town, when it may be possible to find the record of a particular street or locality in the matter of a few minutes. The Public Record Office, London, has prepared street indexes for some of the large towns of England and Wales. These, if used to good advantage, can sometimes avoid long searches and useless handling of records. These indexes are easy to use, and at the Public Record Office officials will assist in tracing the record of any street or locality that may appear in the street indexes.

The microfilm copy of the 1851 Census (completed for Wales and Monmouthshire, but not yet completed for England) at the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, may be searched very quickly by using the street indexes of those towns for which indexes are available at that Library. If the microfilm copy of the census records of the town or city concerned is available, then check in the card catalogue in the "England General" file under the word *Census* for the card showing the following:

- Eng. Census of 1851. Street Addresses.
- 307 An index to street and other addresses used in the
 1851 Census. Volumes 1 to 12.

If the town or city required is listed, apply for the volume concerned and see if the street or locality in that town is mentioned in the street address index. If one does not know the name of the street or locality, such information might be obtained from certified copies of birth, marriages, and deaths; from old letters, journals or diaries; from the *Directory* of the town concerned for a year near to 1851; and from other sources such as parish register entries.

The following example shows how one might obtain a street address *before* beginning a search in the 1851 Census returns of a large city:

In the old family records of Henry D. Moyle, mention is made of his great-grand-uncle, John Dinwoodey of Liverpool. The information stated that he had been married twice, that his second wife was named Harriet who died in 1848, and that John Dinwoodey died in 1853. As there was no mention of any children, it was thought best to see the record of his family as shown in the 1851 Census. The death record of John Dinwoodey was traced at the General Register Office, London, but nothing was found for his wife, Harriet, in the death records 1846 to 1850. Details shown on his death record included the following:

Registration District of Liverpool, Lancs.
Death in the subdistrict of Saint Martin.
Died on 13 April 1853 at Athol Street,
John Dinwoody aged 50 years, an engineer.

The 1851 Census of Liverpool and its suburbs is in no less than seventeen bundles of books of more than 23,600 pages, recording over 400,000 persons! The microfilm copy consists of thirty-three rolls of microfilm. Even if the "sub-district of Saint Martin, Liverpool" was searched, this record consists of two bundles of books with 3,600 pages and a population of 61,000, comprising six rolls of microfilm! If there is an index to the names of streets in the 1851 Census of the locality, it would be most helpful. In this case, Liverpool is so indexed. Obtaining the volume in the Library of the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City (call number Eng. 307, volume 6), under letter "A" will be found the following references:

ATHOL STREET	2177	1.	4.
	2177	3.	7.
	2177	4.	6, 7, 8.

At the Public Record Office, London, the above references have a straightforward meaning, being references to *bundle* 2177, *book* 1 in that bundle, and *division* 4 in that book; also *bundle* 2177, book 3 and division 7; and also *bundle* 2177, book 4 and divisions 6, 7, and 8.

At the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, the same references may also be followed, and it is very easy to trace the census record of a street in the microfilm copy by remembering the details mentioned in Chapter 7, but repeated here in more detail:

- i. Each bundle of books at the Public Record Office in London has its own call number (for instance "*bundle 2177*" of this example) and this bundle number appears at the bottom of every page of microfilm.
- ii. In each of the bundles there are several books, each having its own number (such as 1, 2, 3, 4).
- iii. Within each of these books there are divisions which are also numbered (such as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).
- iv. A special set of page numbering appears for each double page of the Census Records. This page numbering commences at page 1 of the first book in the bundle and runs consecutively through each book to the end of the bundle. The page numbers are those which appear on the top right-hand corner of the pages. (See Plate I.)

Insofar as a microfilm copy has been made, a special book¹ is to be compiled relating to the towns and cities for which there is an index to the streets and localities. However, one must not expect to find that this book, when available, will cover all towns.² By using the street indexes and this special book, it will be possible within a matter of a few seconds to determine the microfilm call number for any particular street address reference.

The subject of the example, "Athol Street, Liverpool," has been shown to have three distinct references, which means that this street appears in three different places in the Census Records. Consider the first reference:

ATHOL STREET 2177 1. 4.

This means "bundle 2177, book 1, division 4."

Similarly, the second reference, 2177.3.7. and the third reference, 2177. 4. 6, 7, 8., are interpreted in the same way.

Having obtained these references to a particular street, it is now necessary to refer to the special book already mentioned³. In this special book the *bundle* numbers are consecutively arranged, showing the *book* numbers, *division* num-

1. This special book, which relates the street indexes for certain large towns and cities to the Genealogical Society's Library Call Number, must not be confused in any way with the book already mentioned in Chapter 7. (The book mentioned in Chapter 7 relates to an alphabetical list of all parishes, both large and small.)

2. The words, *towns* and *cities*, are employed in the English sense, meaning places with very large populations.

3. See Footnote 1.

EXAMPLE of: 1851 Census. Guide to the Street Index References

District	Sub-District	Bundle No	Book in the bundle	bundles: 2176 to 2180		Page Numbers on film	Library Call No. F. ENG. 14
				Divisions in the books			
Liverpool	St. Martin	2176	1	1 to 6		1 to 206	Part 43
Liverpool	St. Martin	2176	2	1 to 7		207 to 422	Part 43
Liverpool	St. Martin	2176	3	1 to 6		423 to 626	Part 44
Liverpool	St. Martin	2176	4	1 to 7		627 to 847	Part 45
Liverpool	St. Martin	2177	1	1 to 6		1 to 229	Part 46
Liverpool	St. Martin	2177	2	1 to 7		230 to 431	Part 46
Liverpool	St. Martin	2177	3	1 to 7		432 to 694	Part 47
Liverpool	St. Martin	2177	4	1 to 9		695 to 967	Part 48
Liverpool	Howard St.	2178	1	1 to 7		1 to 198	Part 49
Liverpool	Howard St.	2178	2	1 to 7		199 to 385	Part 49
Liverpool	Howard St.	2178	3	1 to 8		385 to 595	Part 50
Liverpool	Howard St.	2178	4	1 to 7		595 to 814	Part 50
Liverpool	Dale Str.	2179	1	1 to 8		1 to 246	Part 51
Liverpool	Dale Str.	2179	2	1 to 9		247 to 456	Part 51
Liverpool	Dale Str.	2179	3	1 to 8		456 to 672	Part 52
Liverpool	Dale Str.	2179	4	1 to 8		673 to 928	Part 52
Liverpool	St. George	2180	1	1 to 5		1 to 179	Part 53
Liverpool	St. George	2180	2	1 to 6		180 to 359	Part 53
Liverpool	St. George	2180	3	1 to 6		360 to 563	Part 54

FIG. 1. Example of arrangement of Bundle Nos., Book Nos. and Division Nos., as quoted in Street Address References for a large town or city. The page numbers on the film refer to numbers appearing in top right-hand corner of pages of the census records.

bers, and *page* numbers where they appear on the microfilm, as well as the Library call number for the microfilm concerned. (See example Fig. 1.)

It is now a simple matter to refer to the special book, find the *bundle* number, *book* number, *division* number, *page* numbers where they appear on the microfilm, and the Library call number.

In the example of "Athol Street," given as reference 2177.1.4., if one refers to the illustration (*see* Fig. 1) it is to be noted that this reference relates to the census records between pages 1 and 229 on the microfilm, with Library call number F. Eng. 14 part 46. The second reference for "Athol Street" (2177.3.7) is to pages 432 to 694 on microfilm F. Eng. 14 part 47; the third reference for "Athol Street" (2177.4, 6, 7, 8.) being to pages 695 to 967 on microfilm F. Eng. 14 part 48. These references, page numbers, and library call numbers should be entered into the research notebook.

One may now write on the application slip at the Library, the call number F. Eng. 14 part 46. Nothing else is necessary on the Library slip as this is the complete call number, and the library assistant will place the correct roll of microfilm on the reading machine.

Turning the microfilm copy of the census returns to page 1 of the record, which is the commencement of *book* 1 of the *bundle* 2177, and at the same time, of *division* 1 of that *book*, one may now begin the search. As the reference required (2177.1.4.) means *book* 1 *division* 4, the microfilm is turned until *division* 4 is found, which in this particular example is at page 123 of the record, and in the "Description of Enumeration District" is the statement that it contains "all that part of Athol Street at the east-end of the street." Search is then made of the record of *that part* of Athol Street. This record does not show any Dinwoody family.

There is no need to search any further in this book and division, for it is known that there is no other part of Athol Street on this roll of microfilm. It is now necessary to search the other two references given for that street, being F. Eng. 14 part 47 and part 48, in exactly the same manner. These other two records show parts of Athol Street, but no Dinwoody family is recorded.

Not having found the record of the family, the researcher must now make a decision. By searching records of the streets near to Athol Street one might find the family, to use a familiar expression, "just around the corner." However, while this will occasionally lead to the family, it may not work in areas of large population. Perhaps if a record of the death of Harriet, the wife of John Dinwoody can be found, another street address may be traced. As the record of Mrs. Harriet Dinwoody, who was said to have died in 1848, was not found at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, maybe the year (1848) was wrong. A letter was sent to the superintendent registrar of Liverpool, Lancs., asking him to make a search in his registration districts, and if the entry cannot be traced there, to name the other districts, close to the City of Liverpool where the record might be filed. In this particular case the superintendent registrar of Liverpool stated that no trace of the death record of Harriet Dinwoody was found in his records. However, it was found in the adjoining registration district of West Derby, Liverpool. The record shows that she did not die between 1846 and 1850, but died on the 31 March 1851, the certified copy showing the following:

Registration District of West Derby, Lancs.
Death in subdistrict of Walton on the Hill.
Died 31 March 1851 at *Orrell View*, Bootle-cum-Linacre.
Harriet Dinwoody, age 41 years,
wife of John Dinwoody, Engineer.

As West Derby is a district in the suburbs of Liverpool, reference is again made to the street index (Library call number Eng. 307, vol. 6) for the street, *Orrell View*, where Harriet Dinwoody died. Under letter "O" is found the following:

ORRELL VIEW. 2191. 3. 2.

Turning again to the special book it is quite easy to find reference to bundle 2191 book 3 division 2. The special book discloses that this division 2 appears somewhere between pages 375 and 488 on the microfilm (Library call number F. Eng. 14 part 72). When this microfilm is placed on the reading machine, one turns to page 375 (which is, in this case, the beginning of book 3 division 1). One now turns to division 2, and searches for *Orrell View* and the Din-

woody family record. At Number 1, Orrell View, Bootle-cum-Linacre, appears the following record:

			<i>age</i>		<i>Birthplaces.</i>
Head.	John Dinwoody.	mar.	55.	Engineer	Douglas, Isle of Man.
Wife.	Harriet	do mar.	47		Chiselhurst, Kent.
Niece.	Frances	do Unmd.	21		Warrington, Lancs.
Servant	Elizabeth Bell,	widow	51		Liverpool, do.

The time taken to check the *street Index for Liverpool*, then the special book for the page numbers and call numbers, and finally to obtain the microfilm and check it for the street, is amazingly short. As a matter of fact, it might be done in less than thirty minutes. If one did not know that the family was resident at *Orrell View* (which is about four miles from the center of Liverpool and the other street address Athol Street), it would take several weeks of searching the Census of Liverpool and its suburbs to trace the record desired!

In some large towns there are several different streets having the same name. In such cases, it may be necessary to search the record of each of these streets.

Chapter Nine

THE PARISH AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

THERE are fifty-two counties in England and Wales. The counties are divided into large areas known as *hundreds*, *wapentakes*, *sokes*, *liberties*, *commots*, *rapes*, *lathes*, and *wards*, which are merely names for territorial divisions of various sizes. Within each of these divisions are the *parishes*, which form the smallest unit of both church and civil administration, and have for many centuries formed the center of community life. There are two definitions for the word *parish*. In one case it may refer to the Church of England and in another case to the local government (civil) administration.

- i. Ecclesiastically a parish is a district served by a clergyman of the established Church of England (the State Church). The traditional definition, as given by Cripps



For many centuries the parish formed the center of community life.

is, "that circuit of ground which is committed to the charge of one person or vicar, or to other minister having cure of souls therein."¹

- ii. A civil parish, which is also known as a township, may consist of an area which is only part of an ecclesiastical parish, or it may have the same size and boundaries of an ecclesiastical parish, and in some cases it may include within its boundaries several ecclesiastical parishes. The boundaries of the civil parish or township are determined for local government purposes only.
- iii. In another chapter it will be shown that the parish, while a unit of civil and ecclesiastical administration within the county, is also part of the Church of England's divisions of rural deaneries, archdeaconries, dioceses, and provinces. These areas take little or no notice of counties and their boundaries.

Here are some examples of ecclesiastical and civil parishes, taken from commonly-used reference books:

- i. Chatburn, Lancashire.
 - a. Bartholomew's *Gazetteer** states it is a parish two miles northeast of Clitheroe.
 - b. Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary** states it to be a township 2¼ miles north-east of Clitheroe and situated in the parish of Whalley.
- ii. Clitheroe, Lancashire
 - a. Bartholomew's *Gazetteer* states it is a borough and market town.
 - b. Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary* gives it as a borough, market town and parochial chapelry in the parish of Whalley.
- iii. Downham, Lancashire
 - a. Bartholomew's *Gazetteer* lists it as a parish three miles east of Clitheroe.
 - b. Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary*, states it is a chapelry in the parish of Whalley, three miles east-north-east of Clitheroe.

These three examples serve to illustrate that when Bartholomew's *Gazetteer* states a place is a parish, that does not necessarily mean that it has a parish church with parish registers. It might mean that it is a *civil* parish, which often does not have a parish church with registers. Lewis's *Topographi-*

1. *On the Law of Church and Clergy* (1921 ed.), p. 344. Cripps.

2. *The Survey Gazetteer of the British Isles* (Edinburgh: 1950). John Bartholomew.

3. *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (1831 and 1833 edd) and *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales* (1833 ed.; London). Samuel Lewis.

cal Dictionary, when stating a place is a parish, invariably means that it has a parish church and register. In most instances, when Lewis's states a place is a chapelry or a parochial chapelry, that also means it *may* have a Church of England chapel with a register. Statements are always given by Lewis's as to the name of the ancient parish in which the chapelry is contained. For instance, Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary* states "*Downham*, a chapelry in that part of the parish of Whalley . . . three miles (E.N.E.) from Clitheroe." Downham has a church, and registers, as also has the ancient Mother parish of Whalley. It should also be noted that in cases where Lewis's states a place is a *township* or some other small division, such as *hamlet*, *village*, *tything*, information will also be given as to the name of the parish in which it is situated.

Lewis's *Topographical Dictionaries* are therefore excellent reference books, and genealogists are advised to use them often. Bartholomew's *Gazetteer* is of no help in this particular type of enquiry. Lewis's also give indications as to which ancient probate courts should be searched.⁴ One pitfall is the extent of many ancient parishes in some of the northern counties. For example, Lewis's states that *Chatburn* is a township (a *civil* parish) in the *ecclesiastical* parish of Whalley. This is true, but on examining the map (see Fig. 1), it will be found that Chatburn is on the highway between Clitheroe and Downham, both of which are parochial chapelries, each with churches and registers. It is very possible that parents would have their children christened in the parochial chapelry at either one place or the other, rather than travel several miles further to the ancient parish church situated in Whalley village.

The main concern, in genealogical research, is the ecclesiastical parish of the Church of England, and it will be referred to as the *parish* throughout this work. It is the district served by the clergyman of the Church of England. He is often referred to as the *vicar* or *rector*, the title depending upon the original endowment of the income of the parish minister. In many instances one clergyman serves more than one parish, and he may be the vicar of one parish and the

4. It should be noted that *A Topographical Dictionary of England* by Samuel Lewis editions of 1831 and 1833 and *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales* by Samuel Lewis, edition of 1833, are the only editions which give information as to ecclesiastical jurisdictions which might be followed in seeking probate records.

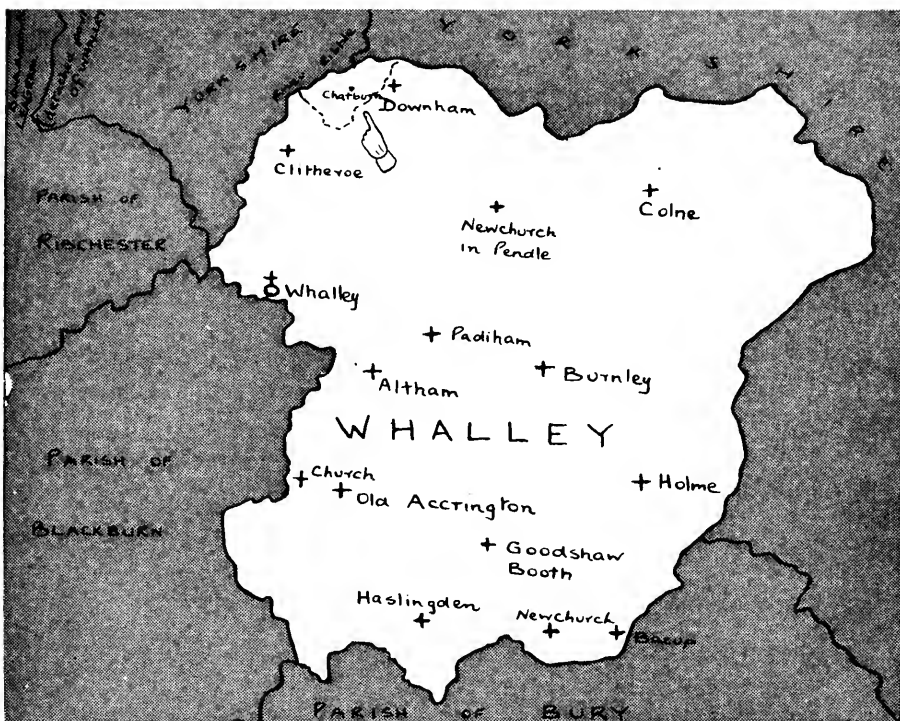


FIG. 1. Sketch Showing Whalley, Clitheroe, Chatburn, and Downham

⦿ Position of ancient "mother" parish church.

† Position of parochial chapels.

- - - - - Township (many omitted) - - - - - Boundary of township of Chatburn.

rector of another. The *curate*, in the modern sense, is his assistant in ministering to the parishioners, the name originating from the "cure of souls." A Church of England parish contains:

- i. At least one church, known as the *parish church*. The parish registers contain baptisms (also called christenings), marriages, and burials and are usually kept at the church. Several other types of documents were also kept.
- ii. An ancient parish may have a number of churches within the ancient parish boundary, the main parish church often being referred to as the *Mother Church* and the others known as:
 - (a) Parochial Chapels.
 - (b) Chapels of Ease.
 - (c) Occasionally as *daughter churches*.The number of such other churches within the parish was usually governed by the rise in population, convenience in distance, and in certain towns additional churches were built anciently for special reasons. Chapels of other religious groups are discussed in Chapter 15.
- iii. Small villages, hamlets, tythings, farms and places which may have their own names are found in many parishes, but are merely localities within those parishes.
- iv. Some ancient parishes include many townships or civil parishes. Prestbury in Cheshire has thirty-two townships. Whalley in Lancashire has many townships including several large towns within its ancient boundaries. There are many ancient cities that have more than one ancient parish, such as Bristol with nineteen.

The administration of the parish is vested in the minister. Usually, annually, at least two churchwardens are chosen to assist him. In many parishes one churchwarden is the choice of the minister and the other of the parishioners. In large parishes there may be more than two churchwardens. In Wrexham, Denbighshire, there were four, one for each of the four divisions of the parish which had many townships. Their term of office was for one year and unpaid, but signatures appearing in the parish records indicate that some carried the burden for several years. Primarily, their duties were to see that the fabric of the church was maintained, and to administer the property and money obtained from the parishioners. In many parishes the account books and minutes of their meetings still exist, and are often called *Churchwardens Accounts* and *Vestry Minutes*. These records

have some genealogical value as they mention persons who paid or received money for upkeep of buildings, purchases of commodities such as sacramental wine, the payments of church rates (taxes), and other business, thus establishing a few facts about residents. Some of the records are extensive. They take many hours to search but occasionally the search is worth the effort.

In some parishes there exist Charities, the funds being from proceeds of donations and legacies. If these are ecclesiastical, the minister and churchwardens usually administer them and keep records that occasionally contain information valuable to genealogists. For example, a search of the parish registers of Penderyn, Brecknockshire, and the probate records of the Diocese and Archdeaconry of the locality, did not produce all the needed clues on the Price ancestry. In referring to *A History of the County of Brecknock* a clue to the ancestral Price family was given in a reference to Parish Charities. Here is part of the quotation:

“A Tenement called Melinrhydian in this [Penderyn] parish, is charged by the will of Edward Price of Ewyas Harold in Herefordshire, proved at Doctors Commons in 1797, with the payment of Six Pounds [Sterling] per annum to the poor.”⁵

The mention of this charity was a clue that the probate record was not filed in the local courts but was at *Doctors Commons* (the old name for the former place of deposit for the probate records of the Prerogative Court of the Archbishop of Canterbury now housed at the Principal Probate Registry, Somerset House, London). The information also shows a former connection of the Price family with Ewyas Harold, a parish in another county.

The impression must not be gained that there was no connection between the minister and churchwardens of the ecclesiastical parish and the officers of the civil parish or township. Actually, there was a very close connection, but space will not permit a full explanation. In many parishes the churchwardens also held the civil offices, such as the *overseers of the poor*, who looked after the assessing of rates (taxes), to provide funds for the relief of the poor; and the *overseers of the Highways and Bridges* within the parish, also

5. *A History of the County of Brecknock*, Brecknock, 1898, Theophilus Jones.

known as *waywardens*, who superintended the raising of tax money for the maintenance of the roads. The leading residents of the civil parish or township would be represented by a select number of persons in a meeting, known as the *vestry*, who selected the parish (or parochial) officers, such as the churchwardens, overseers of the poor, overseers of the highways, parish constables, and any other officers according to the needs of a parish.

The accounts kept by the various overseers have a limited genealogical value, but sometimes they contain important clues. The overseers of the poor, chosen annually by the vestry, were one or more in number. They had the responsibility of administering the Poor Laws, which included caring for the sick, providing relief to the poor, apprenticing poor children, assisting the parish constable, and a long list of other duties. Since ancient times, the church had much to do with the relief of the poor, but between 1388 and 1834 there were various acts of legislation governing the poor, the most important probably being that of 1662, when the "Act of Settlement" became law.⁶ Although modified from time to time, it meant that the working class who moved from the parish, had to obtain a "Settlement Certificate" from the parish officers and deliver it to the officials of the new parish of residence. This was an agreement by the home parish (that is, the parish in which the person or family had a previous *settlement*) to receive the person or family concerned back into residence and to pay any expenses incurred by another parish for their maintenance or removal. Many of the documents, known as "Settlement Certificates," found their way into the old parish chest kept by the churchwardens and overseers of the parish, but the majority of the records have been destroyed. The "parish of settlement" is not necessarily the place of birth, as there were many ways in which a *settlement* might be gained, such as payment of taxes (rates), length of residence, apprenticeship, service.

When a family moved into a parish and delivered a settlement certificate to the parish officers, that family may

6. The history of Settlement and its effect upon the people is too extensive to be discussed here. For additional information see: W. E. Tate, *The Parish Chest, A Study of the Records of Parochial Administration in England*. (Cambridge: The University Press, 1946.) Also C. P. Ketchley, "Settlement and Its Legal Definition," *The Amateur Historian*, Vol. II, January, 1956. P. 268.

Bucks 1s

We John 1st Thomas Morris John 2^d Gavin and
Thomas Moody Churchwardens and Overseers of the Parishes
the Parish of Upton cum Chalvey in the said County Doe hereby
acknowledg Thomas Applebee and Mary his Wife to be
Inhabitants legally settled in our said Parish of Upton cum
Chalvey, In Witness whereof we have hereunto sett our
hands and scales the 8 day of April In the
17th Year of her Maj^{ties} Reigne Queen Ann of great
Brittaine &c Annoq^{ue} Domⁱⁿⁱ 1712

Witness

John Applebee
his mark

John Applebee
Churchwardens

W^m Leather

Thomas Morris

John Gunt

Thomas Moody

Overseers

John Gavin

allowed by us two of the Justices
In Chief of the Peace for the County
aforesaid

John Hogg

John Perriman

PLATE 1. The Settlement Certificate of Thomas Applebee and Mary his wife, 1712.

have remained there for some considerable time. In many cases children were born, and the parents died in this new parish of residence. As time went by, their origin was forgotten by the descendants. The Settlement Certificate and allied documents may be the sole clue as to their former place of residence, if such records are traceable. Here is an example of a Settlement Certificate transmitted in 1712 from a parish of settlement to a parish of new residence, and may be the only evidence of the origin of the persons named therein (*see* PLATE I):

BUCKS. S. S. We, John Webb, Thomas Morris, John Bavin, and Thomas Moodey Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor for the Parish of Upton cum Chalvey in the said County, Doe hereby acknowledge Thomas Applebee and Mary his Wife to be Inhabitants legally settled in our said Parish of Upton cum Chalvey, In Witness whereof we have hereunto sett our hands and Seales the 8th day of Aprill In the Eleventh Year of her Majties Reigne Queen Ann of great Brittain &c Anno Dom 1712.

This document relates to persons who left Upton-cum-Chalvey in Buckinghamshire and went to reside in Tilehurst, Berkshire. The christening registers of Tilehurst show that on the 20th July 1712 Mary, daughter of Thomas and Mary Appleby, was christened, but the parish registers make no mention of the origin of the parents or family. (*See* PLATE II.)

Some families moved into a parish without informing the overseers, and occasionally it was quite some time before the matter was brought to their attention, usually at the time the family became in need of public relief. Here is an example of what happened when the head of the family was examined by the magistrates or Justices of the Peace. This first document is called a "Removal Order." On page two of this "Removal Order" provision was made for additional details as was needed.

Page one of the document:

To the Church-wardens of the Poor of the Parish of *Tilehurst* in the County of *Berks* and to the Church-wardens and Overseers of the Poor of the Parish of *Yately* in the County of *Southampton*.

Berkshire)
to wit.)

Whereas Complaint hath been made unto us, whose names are hereunto set, and seals affixed, being Two of His Majesty's



PLATE II. "Tom Applebee! I hope you haven't lost the Settlement papers."

Justices of the Peace in and for the County of Berks afore-
said, (One whereof being of the Quorum) by the Church-
wardens and Overseers of the Poor of the said Parish of
Tilehurst
That

Charles Burton and Ann his wife

have come to inhabit in the said parish of *Tilehurst* not hav-
ing gained a legal settlement there, *and are* actually become
chargeable to the same; We the said Justices, upon due Proof

made thereof, as well upon the Examination of the said *Charles Burton* upon Oath, as other Circumstances, do adjudge the same to be true, and do also adjudge the Place of Legal Settlement of the said

Charles Burton and Ann his wife

to be the Parish of *Yately* in the County of *Southampton*

These are therefore in His Majesty's Name to require you the said Church wardens and Overseers of the Poor of the said parish of *Tilehurst* on Sight hereof, to remove and convey the said *Charles Burton and Ann his wife* from and out of your said parish of *Tilehurst* to the said parish of *Yately* and them deliver unto the Church Wardens and Overseers of the Poor there, or to some or one of them, together with this our Order, or a true copy hereof, who are hereby required to receive and provide for *them* according to Law

Given under our hands and Seals, the *Twenty Seventh Day* of *November* in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and *Nineteen*.

Page two of the document, too lengthy to detail here, contains statements that Charles Burton was at that time unable to travel, by reason of sickness and infirmity, and the order for removal was suspended. Then appears another statement, dated 5th February 1820, that Charles Burton "hath since the date of the within and above order departed this life," and the order was made to convey "the said Ann Burton" from Tilehurst to Yateley. On the back of the document in handwriting appears: "Delivered the within named Ann Burton to Mr. Wm. Giblet, Overseer of Yately, Hants, on Tuesday the 8th Day of Feb. 1820."

The facts gleaned from the document show that Charles Burton died early in 1820, that he was formerly of Yately, that his wife was named Ann, and that she was conveyed back to Yately.

Here is an example of an examination of a poor person made by a Justice of the Peace:

BERKS: The Examination of Joseph Stride taken upon oath the eighth Day of November in the Year 1791

This EXAMINANT on his Oath saith that he is the Son of Joseph Stride who is a parishioner legally settled in the parish of *ELING* in the County of *SOUTHAMPTON* where this Examinant was born, And that he has never done any Act in his own right to gain a Settlement elsewhere. And that he was this day married in the Parish

Church of Saint Lawrence in Reading in the said County
of Berks to Ann his now wife
Sworn Before Me
Henry Deane

Joseph Stride

Here are excerpts of a more lengthy examination that contains genealogical information (see PLATE III):

SURRY: These are to certify . . . that Mary Newman late of the Parish of Froom in Somerset but now of the parish of Saint Olave in Southwark and the wife of John Edwards, a sawyer came this day . . . and made oath that the contents of the annexed copy of the Register of her Marriage to John West of Froom aforesaid is true, who married her by the name of John West a batchelor at the said Parish Church of Froom and on the day mentioned . . . by the then name of Mary Newman, spinster.

Sworn at my office in the Bridge Yard 16 Jan 1765.

Mary Edwards her x mark.

Attached to the above declaration of Mrs. Mary Edwards, formerly Mary Newman and lately Mrs. Mary West, is a marriage record copy as follows (see PLATE IV):

No 20 John West of this parish &
Mary Newman of this parish were
married in this Church by Banns this
third day of November in the sd. year
One Thousand Seven Hundred & fifty four
by me Peter Mayson,

This parish document is unusual, but it certainly shows that in 1765 there resided in St. Olave, Southwark, Surrey, John Edwards and his wife, Mary, who had previously been married to John West.

Another type of declaration is shown in the following record of Elizabeth Elms. The document commences as is usual, with the name of the county and details of the Examination. Here is a digest (see PLATE V):

BERKS. Examination of Elizabeth Elms, singlewoman, resident of Tilehurst. Examined at Reading. Her statements include the following:

- i. Born at Hiclear, Hampshire.
- ii. At age of 16 years was a hired servant to Mr. Trent of Dennington, Berks.
- iii. Afterwards a servant with Mrs. Blaithwaite at Dennington, and later at Englefield where she resided five years.

N^o 20. John West of this Parish &
 Mary Newman of this Parish 1744 mar-
 ried in this Church by Banns this thir-
 day of November in 1744 year our Shan-
 hundred seven hundred & fifty four by Mr
 Peter Mayson

This marriage was solemnized by John West Minister
 between us - - - - - (A Mary Newman;

In presence of 3 Witnesses, viz. Mark
 Sam. Rice

The above is a true copy of 1st Marriage
 Register of Frome

Peter Mayson Curate

of Frome

Becks Tonty } The Examination of Elizabeth Elms ^{single woman} resided out
in the parish of Silchester in the said County and
taken on oath at the Three Tunnies in Reading -
before us Stephen Chave Esq and the Rev George
Talbot Esq two of his Majesties Justices of the peace
in and for the said County

This Examinant on her Oath saith that she was born at
Mileca in the County of Hants says that when she was about
sixteen years of age, she lived as hired servant to Front Esq
of Bennington in the said County of Hants
for one twelve month at the yearly wages of four Pounds, says
that she lived there the twelve month and received her full
wages says that afterwards she lived with Mrs Blaithe wait
at Bennington aforesaid one year at five Pounds for the year
says that her mistress Mrs Blaithe wait removing from
Bennington aforesaid to Inglesfield in the said County this
Examinant went with her and lived with her at Inglesfield
aforesaid for the space of five years as a hired servant
at the like wages of five Pounds a year says that she
lived the whole five years and received all her wages
says that afterwards she went to live with one Richard Torr
at Theale in the parish of Silchester by whom this Examinant
has had four children viz John aged eleven years Thomas
who was born at Mileca aforesaid, Sophia aged eight years
Francis aged five years and Isaac aged one year and a
half were born at Theale in the parish of Silchester

Sworn this day & year to at
the place above signed us -

Step^r Chave
Geo. Talbot

- iv. Afterwards she went to live with Richard Jones at Theale in the parish of Tilehurst, by whom she has had four children, viz: John aged eleven years was born at Hiclear; Sophia aged eight years, Frances aged five years, and Isaac aged one year and a half were all born at Theale.
- v. Richard Jones was a bricklayer, and that she went to live with him "upon a promise of marriage which he never performed." The children are surnamed Jones in one place in this document which is dated May, 1766.

The churchwardens and overseers of the poor were always watching for possible future expenditures, and they made attempts to forestall them. When they learned that a child was to be born to an unmarried mother (or in some cases the child had already been born), they would make discreet enquiries. If the family concerned would not promise to pay the charges that might fall upon the parish for the expenses of the birth and the maintenance of the child, then the constable would be ordered to bring the woman to the Justices of the Peace for an examination, to see if it could be determined who was the father of the child. If from the examination his identity was learned, he would be brought to court to defend himself. If he was adjudged by the court to be the father, he would be ordered to pay the expenses. Sometimes the parish officers would try to encourage the couple concerned to agree to a marriage. If this were not possible, bonds were drawn up to secure the payments covering any expenses falling upon the parish.

Here is an example of a Court Order concerning a child born out of wedlock:

BERKS, To wit: The Order of George Mitford, Esquire and the Revd Edward Cove, Clerk, Two of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said county . . . made the 24th July 1824 concerning a female bastard child, lately born in the Parish aforesaid (Tilehurst) of the Body of Margaret Knibbs, single Woman.

Whereas it hath been duly made appear unto us, the said Justices, as well upon the Complaint of the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the Parish of Tilehurst as upon the oath of the said Margaret Knibbs that she was delivered of a female Bastard Child at and in the said parish on the Nineteenth Day of June last and that the said Bastard Child is now chargeable to the same, and likely to continue; and further that Moses Slade of Tilehurst in the said county labourer did beget the

said Bastard Child on the Body of her the said Margaret Knibbs, and Whereas the said Moses Slade hath appeared before us pursuant to our summons for that purpose but shown to us no sufficient cause why he should not be adjudged the reputed father of the said Bastard Child We, therefore, upon the Examination of the Cause and Circumstances of the Premises, as well upon the Oath of the said Margaret Knibbs as otherwise, do hereby adjudge him the said Moses Slade to be the reputed Father of the said Bastard Child.

Then follows an order that Moses Slade shall pay the Overseers forty-two shillings for the maintenance of the child and shall further pay two shillings each week for as long as the child is chargeable to the parish. Margaret Knibbs was also ordered to pay one shilling weekly.

Another document, known as a "Bond of Indemnity" is of interest. It may be that the bond was drawn up without any order of the court or intervention of the Justices of the Peace, but may have been a business arrangement between the churchwardens and overseers without any public disclosures.

KNOW ALL MEN by these Presents that George Deane of Shinfield in the County of Wilts, yeoman, John Deane of Whitley in the County of Berks, Wheelwright and Bernard Body of Shinfield aforesaid Yeoman are held and firmly bound to Thomas Goswell, William Butler Webb, Robert Webb and Benjamin Draper, Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the Parish of Tilehurst in the said County of Berks in the penal sum of Two Hundred Pounds of Good and lawful Money of Great Britain. To be paid to the said Churchwardens and Overseers or their certain Attorneys, etc. for the true payment whereof we bind ourselves and each and every of us separately, etc. Dated 26 July 1825.

Whereas SARAH MARSHALL of Tilehurst in the County of Berks, singlewoman, being in a state of Pregnancy whose child is likely to be born a Bastard and when Born will become and be chargeable to the said Parish of Tilehurst.

And Whereas the above bounden George Deane has acknowledged himself to be the reputed father of such Child. And Whereas the above named Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the said Parish of Tilehurst have applied to and requested the above bounden George Deane to Indemnify and save harmless them the above named Churchwardens and Overseers and their successors

for the time being of the said Parish of Tilehurst of and from all costs charges damages and expenses which the said parish of Tilehurst may be put unto for or by reason on account of the said child of the said Sarah Marshall with which she is now pregnant as aforesaid which the said George Deane hath consented and agreed to do in manner hereunto mentioned and the said John Deane and Bernard Body have agreed to join therein.

At the end of the document, which continues on for another page of legal jargon, appears the signatures of the three men whose names appear in the bond, George Deane, John Deane, and Bernard Body.

In cases where an entry of christening shows the child was born out of wedlock, but no documents are in existence in the parish chest, the details may be recorded in the records of the Courts of the County, known as Quarter Sessions Records. Here is an example:

LYMM, Cheshire parish registers, year 1782.

Born 6 July)	Thomas and)	children of Betty
Chr. 18 August)	Margaret)	Bowden and William Leigh.

The "Quarter Sessions Records," kept at the Cheshire Records Office, includes the following:

COUNTY SESSIONS MINUTE BOOK No 25a for 1778-1784.

WILLIAM LEIGH the <i>Younger</i>)	
of Lymm, husbandman	£20.0.0.) Bastardy of
WILLIAM LEIGH the <i>Elder</i>)	Elizth Boden
of the same place)	singlewoman.
husbandman	£10.0.0.)

This means that William Leigh, the *younger* (the adjudged father of the child) and William Leigh, the *elder* (most probably the father of the younger of that name) were subjects of a court proceeding in the case of Elizabeth Boden. The proceedings of the court were held at Nether Knutsford on 16 July 1782, which was ten days after the child was born and a month before it was christened.

In some parish registers no mention is made of the name of the father of the child, in which case these other documents offer the only clues as to his identity. Note how there were two men, both named William Leigh, residing at the same time in the same parish, but that the christening entry does not indicate which of the two was the father.

The parish constable was chosen annually from the residents of the township or parish, and it is believed that men were taken in rotation. The constable was appointed by the Justices of the Peace of the county, and he was responsible within his parish for maintaining law and order, caring for the stocks, whipping post, and ducking stool; the apprehension of rogues, vagabonds, and others and bringing them to the magistrates; the arrest of those ordered to appear in court; administering punishments to convicted offenders; accompanying vagrants and others to the House of Correction and many other duties. By 1856 the office of parish constable had been superseded by the county and town police force or constabulary. Records of the activities of the parish constable are often helpful as the following extract from a document of examination attests (see PLATE VI):

The examination of *Martha Burnett* rogue and vagabond apprehended by *Ye Constable of Aylesbury* in the County of *BUCKS* and brought before me, one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of *Bucks* aforesaid, And taken before Me this 18th day of April in the year of our Lord 1760

Then follows instructions to convey Martha Burnett and her three-week-old daughter to Tilehurst, Berkshire, where she had her settlement. (See PLATE VII.) In order to convey her from Aylesbury, Bucks, to Tilehurst in Berks, she was handed from parish to parish along the route, and she probably had to walk all the way. The document shows that from Aylesbury she was moved to Thame, the first large parish along the route.

To the Constable of Thame in the Co. of Oxford. Convey the within named Vagrant to Wallingford in the County of Berks

On the back of the document are handwritten endorsements by the officials who each in turn saw to the conveyance along the route.

To the constables of the Borough of Wallingford. Convey the within named Vagrants to Cholsey in the Co. of Berks.

To the constables of Cholsey in the County of Berks. Convey the within named vagrant from Cholsey aforesaid to the parish of Tilehurst.

So the poor woman and her three-week-old child arrived in Tilehurst, was delivered to the Constable, and the docu-

Books: THE Examination of Martha Sumner

Rogue and Vagabond apprehended by *W. F. Wells*
in the *County* of *Bucks* and brought before
of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the *County*
Mo this *18th* Day of *Apr*
in the Year of our Lord *1760.*

This Reminant being Quely from Smith that her last
of Settlement the Leged place of Settlement of her &
Child now with her age about Three weeks is at 9. His
in County of Berks & further Smith note)
Taken from 9 Day Year of said John M. Co.
Before Me)
Joseph Barker Bell
Martha & Ben.

the Confable, Henggeorge, Tythingman, and other Officer
of the Parish of the County of Bucks in
the County of Bucks to receive and convey
And to the Churchwardens, Chapelwarden, or Overseer
of the Poor of the Parish, Place or Precinct of any town
in the County of Bucks or either of them to receive and convey

WHEREAS After the Supper the Ten Fugitives made
 while ago a brief review of the war in this day,
 apprehended in the 13th -- of which every other day --
 was out of the Vagrabonds (and their) head of the 16th of their

and upon Examination of the said Martha Bennett taken before *Me this day* upon Oath (which Examination is hereunto annexed) it doth appear that *she is single.*

Born at *Worcester* Infant Female his legacy
the sum of *one hundred pounds* in Tenacity of Goods

Theirs: there fore to require you the said Constable or other Officer
 to carry the said Warrant to Samuel Newell or Stephen Newell
 to John Hume or John Gifford that being the first
 Person in the next Parish through which
 direct Way to the said Warrant to which
they are to be brought and deliver the same to the Constable or
 other Officer of such Parish in which next Precinct together with this
Warrant his Receipt for the same. And the said Warrant to be
 returned to James Gifford to be perused carried on in like Manner to
 the said James Gifford of St. Andrew's
 to be delivered to George Church-warden, or Overseer
 of the Poor of the same Parish
 to be there provided for according to Law. And you the said Church-
 warden, Chapel-warden, or Overseer of the Poor, are hereby required to
 receive the said Person and provide for him as aforesaid. Given under
 my Hand and Seal this 9th Day of March
 in the Year of our Lord 1760.

ment shows that the child born near Aylesbury, Bucks., is connected with the parish of Tilehurst, Berks., the place of settlement of Martha Burnett.

The waywardens, also known as overseers of the highways, looked after the highways and bridges within the parish. To pay for the upkeep of roads, taxes were levied in the parish. The accounts of the overseers, if traceable, show who owned property and paid taxes. Records of payments to contractors and others who did the roadwork are also helpful.

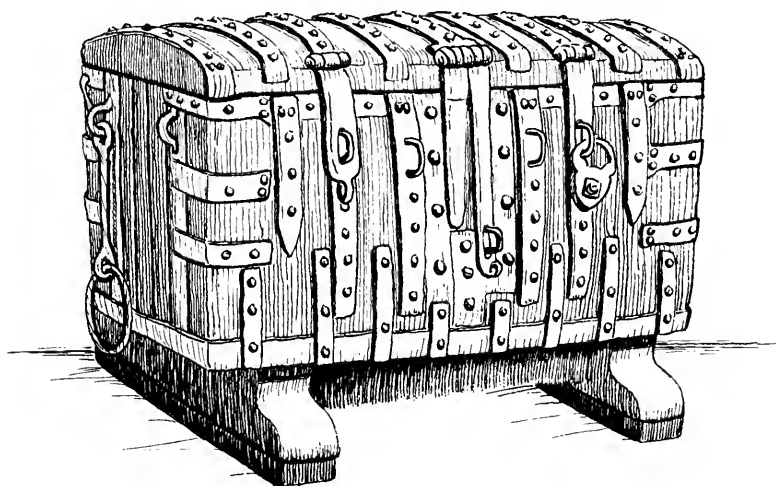
In the *Rates (taxes) Book* for the parish of All Hallows Hoo, Kent, kept by the Surveyors of the Highway, it is noted that in 1819 Richard Everist and Richard Knight signed as the overseers and that Richard Knight, Senior, also signed, the latter being the churchwarden of the parish. The signatures indicate that two men of the same name held parish offices at the same time. In 1818, Mr. Richard Knight paid taxes amounting to £11.14.6, but in the same year he was paid £11.14.6 for work that he had done on the highways. The poor relief book of the same parish records an expenditure in 1832: "paid for Mrs. Bills journey to America £27.17.9" and "paid expenses of thirteen persons to America, £53.10.0," and Richard Knight, Senior signed as a witness. Knights first appear in the account books in 1791. The parish registers of Hoo do not mention either of the two Richard Knights.

The parish clerk (often pronounced "clark") kept the minutes of the vestry meetings, cared for the parish registers of christenings, marriages, burials and banns books, and sometimes he led the singing in the church. In many parishes he was also known as the Verger. Other duties he may have had included being the Sexton or gravedigger, and the caretaker of the churchyard and parish church.

For centuries the parish minister and his other officials were the center of all religious and social activities within the parish. Although the civil parish or township was self-governing in many respects, it was still subordinate, in matters concerning the administration of justice, to the proceedings of the county magistrates or Justices of the Peace and their courts, which were known as "Quarter Sessions." The clergyman was also subject to the ecclesiastical courts of the Church, which had many powers of jurisdiction over the parishioners. Persons were dealt with by the church courts

in charges of adultery, slander, non-payment of tithes (a form of tax), for not keeping the Sabbath, and many other offenses. Some of the records of these church courts are still in existence, and occasionally a clue to an ancestor may be found in them.

In 1538, Thomas Cromwell, minister of state to King Henry VIII, commanded every parish minister to acquire a "sure coffer" with two locks in which were to be kept the parish registers and other church valuables. In many instances the early parish chests were crude, but they were improved as time went on, until today the larger churches have modern wall safes. Because the early parish chests were crude, the registers often suffered from damp and sometimes were totally eaten by rats and mice or destroyed by fire. Parish churches not having good protection for their records are now encouraged to allow the County Record Offices to take care of them. As the parish minister usually presided as chairman over the Vestries, for ecclesiastical and civil matters, the parish church and the parish chest kept therein became the place for depositing the registers, account books, minute books, and other documents of the administrations. The large amount of paper work that was necessary to administer the Poor Law, the highways management, and the



The Parish Chest in which the Registers and Accounts were usually kept.

other duties, soon filled the parish chest with books and documents. As time went on, the obvious thing was for the parish officials to get rid of the oldest so as to make room for more. Many of the valuable records mentioned in this chapter were therefore destroyed. Occasionally some are still found in odd corners of the parish churches—perhaps in the belfry, or hidden away under the tower, or in some forgotten cupboard. In the experience of the authors, incumbents have quite honestly denied having any such old documents or books, except the parish registers, but upon close examination of cupboards in the parish church, old papers of immense genealogical value have been uncovered. In some counties, the County Record Office officials, aware of the situation, are doing a splendid job in collecting many of the old books and documents that still exist.

Chapter Ten

THE PARISH REGISTERS

THE earliest parish registers in England and Wales commence in 1538. Out of more than 11,000 ancient parishes there are less than 700 with registers which go back as far as 1538. The balance have registers which commence in 1540, 1558, 1598, or at some later date. This is an indication that many early parish registers have been lost. From their date of commencement until the 1st July 1837, parish registers are the principal record source for the births, marriages, and deaths of all classes of society.

There are two important books of reference listing all the parishes that have registers dating prior to 1 January 1813:

- i. *Burke's Key To The Ancient Parish Registers of England and Wales*¹ contains an alphabetical list of the parishes in England and Wales, showing the name of the *parish*, the *county* and the *date* of the earliest entry in the registers. Example:

Llandegla, Denbigh, 1710.

- ii. The *Parish Register Abstract*, 1831² was compiled from the results of a government enquiry sent to every parish minister in 1831. This enquiry requested details of all registers kept prior to 1 January 1813. In this publication, the parishes are arranged under the names of the counties. For instance the following example is to be found listed under Denbighshire, Wales:

Llandegla	R.	No. I Bap. 1710-1743	bur. 1710-1741	mar. 1710-1743
		No. II Bap. Bur. 1744-1766	.Mar. 1744-1756	
		No. III Bap. 1777-1812	bur. 1777-1810	
		No. IV Mar. 1757-1812		

The letter "R" following the name of the parish, Llandegla, indicates that the parish minister was a rector. In other cases the letter "V" may be found, which means the

1. *Key To The Ancient Parish Registers of England and Wales*, Arthur M. Burke, London, 1908.
2. *Parish Register Abstract*, 1831. Abstract of the Answers and Returns made pursuant to an Act, passed in the 11th year of the Reign of H. M. King George IV. London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1833.

parish minister was a vicar. If "P. C." appears, this means that the parish was a *Perpetual Curacy*. The above description of Llandegla registers dating prior to 1813 shows that there are five books, the earliest commencing in 1710, and that the burials for 1811 and 1812 are lost. It is possible that at one time there were registers earlier than 1710, but when the Return was made in 1831, they were no longer in existence.

The *Parish Register Abstract* was made in 1831, and Burke's *Key to the Ancient Parish Registers* was published in 1908. This latter book was based on the 1831 *Abstract* and other sources. Since 1908 more registers have been lost through carelessness, enemy action, and other causes.

When planning research, one may save time and trouble by using these reference books. Information on the present whereabouts of original and copy parish registers will be given in Chapter 12, "*How to Use Parish Registers.*"

Wise use of reference books avoids annoying parish ministers with requests to search parish registers that do not exist, visiting parishes to search registers that do not cover the period vital to a pedigree, and searching original registers when there is a first-class copy of them in a conveniently-located library. It is believed that some researchers examine copy parish registers in libraries without ascertaining if there are any missing periods—coinciding with gaps in the original registers. There is also the double danger of searching the indexes of copied parish registers without reading the "Introductions" or looking through the text of the book, to see if any periods in the copy are missing. (See also Chapter 12.)

Some parishes have registers that commence in 1813 or at a later date. These parishes are not listed in the two cited reference books. If there was a church existing in such a place prior to 1813, it was probably a parochial chapelry and the pre-1813 registers may have been entered into the parish registers of the *mother* parish church. However, there are a few pre-1813 parishes that have lost their registers. There have been many parish churches erected since 1813, and consequently their registers commence about the time of their dedication. Those of a later date than 1812 can usually be located by reading the description of parishes in

Lewis's *Topographical Dictionaries*;³ Kelly's *Directories*;⁴ the 1851 *Census Reports*;⁵ There are various publications issued by some of the county councils that give complete lists or inventories of parish registers and other parochial documents relating to parishes within the counties concerned.⁶

Many of the parish registers which began in 1538 were on paper. In 1598, Queen Elizabeth I ordered that parchment books be used from thereafter and that the existing register be copied into the new parchment book. The copyists often began with 1558 (the first year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I). Thus they neglected the twenty-year period 1538-1558. The earlier record, being upon paper, in many cases soon perished, so that many parish registers now commence with 1558.

Methods of recording entries in the parish registers varied throughout the country. Sometimes they were written into the registers chronologically, regardless of whether they were baptisms, marriages, or burials. In some parishes the register was divided into three sections, with baptisms entered in the front, marriages in the middle, and burials in the back pages. Quite often the book was reversed in order to record the burials, thus the burial entries appear to be written "upside-down" in the record. The title on the front cover of some original parish registers might be misleading; it may refer to part of the record contained in the divided volume, and the period covered by the baptisms may not coincide with the period covered by the marriages or the burials. In some large parishes separate registers of baptism, marriages, and burials were kept from quite an early date, but it was not until 1754 that any general law was enforced. Commencing with 25 March (Lady-Day) 1754, it was ordered that all marriages be recorded in a new register book and be kept separate from the registers of baptisms and

3. *A Topographical Dictionary of England*, Samuel Lewis, 1831, 1833 & later edd.; London, and *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales*, 1833 and later ed.; London.

4. Kelly's *Directories*, Limited, London, publish directories of counties, stating within the histories of the parishes, the names of the parish churches, dates when they were built or founded, together with information as to when the parish registers commence.

5. *Census of Great Britain*, 1851. London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1852. Under a section known as Ecclesiastical Districts, found at the end of each division of the Population Tables, appears details of newly created parishes.

6. A good example of these publications is *Inventory of Parochial Documents*, Taunton: Somerset County Council, 1938.

burials. Commencing with 1 January 1813, it was ordered that every parish commence new register books, all of uniform size, consisting of printed blanks, one volume for baptisms, one volume for marriages and one volume for burials. That is the reason that many transcribers and printers of parish registers stop at 1812.

What May One Expect To Find In The Parish Registers?

I. Baptisms:

When an infant or an adult was baptized (often referred to as a *christening*) the event should be recorded in the parish register. Note the varying amount of information given in these examples of complete entries:

Rothwell, Yorkshire.

	1560	Rycherd Flocton was baptized the xvj day August
29 August	1773	Ann daughter of Ralph Harrison of Rothwell
18 June	1780	John son of Nehemiah and Patience Lancaster of Rhodes.

St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, Middlesex (London):

7 Feb. 1821	Benjamin Filmer son of Benjamin John	Hoxton
(born 13 November 1820)	and Jane GARDINER,	Town Chymist

The above entries are affected both by the period of time in which the entry was made and by the method of the clerk who kept the registers. In many early registers no parentage was entered in the register of baptisms. Later the name, and sometimes the residence of the father were mentioned. Still later the name of both the father and mother and sometimes their residence were given. Some clerks also recorded the birthdate of the child, especially when the baptism was considerably later than the birth. Sometimes the age of the child is stated in lieu of a birthdate. Some entries also record the occupation of the father of the child. (See PLATE I.) In certain localities parish registers contain unusually helpful entries, as in the following examples:

Redgrave-cum-Botesdale, Suffolk.

1793. 5 January Mary daughter of James & Susannah Roper (Musk)

Such entries are quite common in East Anglia (parts of Cambs., Norfolk, and Suffolk), but are rarely found in other parts of the country. The name (*Musk*) indicates that the

Page 1.

BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of <i>Little Dean</i> in the County of <i>Gloucester</i> in the Year 1813						
Year	Month	Day	Parish	Name	Age	Parents
1813	Jan	1	Little Dean	John	1	John & Sarah
1813	Jan	10	Little Dean	John	1	John & Sarah
1813	Jan	17	Little Dean	John	1	John & Sarah
1813	Jan	24	Little Dean	John	1	John & Sarah

PLATE I. Baptismal entries at Little Dean, Gloucestershire. Entries appear thus from most parishes after 1 January 1813.

mother of the child, Mrs. Susannah Roper, was Susannah Musk prior to her marriage to James Roper. It cannot, however, be assumed that any name following the baptism record is necessarily the maiden name of the mother, it may be the residence, or even the occupation of the father. The record keeping system of the clerk in question must also be taken into consideration.

Eston, Yorkshire.

24 Sept 1777. Sarah Robinson, daughter of John Robinson, farmer of Eston and son of William Robinson of Norman-

by, farmer; by Sarah his wife who was ye daughter of William Clement late of Normanby a taylor. The child's mother's name is Ann Robinson daughter of Thomas Bulmer of Eston, a carpenter by Elenor his wife the daughter of Thomas Hutton a weaver of Stainton. Born 16 Sept 1777.

Such entries are not common for the entire country, but are sometimes to be found in registers of some parishes in North Yorkshire, County Durham, and a few other scattered places for a period around the close of the eighteenth century, usually from 1765 to 1812.

Sometimes one may wonder whether the clergyman or parish clerk recorded all the christenings that occurred within the parish. The following is of interest:

One of the most flagrant abuses of the time was the custom, universal in London in 1711, of baptizing infants by the public form in private houses . . . Taking place in the parlour or bed-chamber, such baptisms were accompanied with much merriment and with customs which even Pepys regarded with some doubt; they became more decorous in the course of the 18th century, but even in 1785 Wilberforce speaks of such a christening as 'very indecent, all laughing round.' From the point of view of the State the abuse was serious, as such baptisms were frequently omitted from the registers or left to be entered by the parish clerk . . . As late as 1830 Bishop Blomfield complained that the practice had long been partially sanctioned by custom in London.⁷

II Marriages

Usually, marriages took place either in the parish of the bride or of the bridegroom. However, prior to 25 March 1754, many parish ministers would marry a couple without fully conforming with the marriage laws. Actually, before 1754, marriages could take place in any parish church or parochial chapel chosen by the parties concerned, providing that the clergyman was willing to perform the ceremony. Because of the many irregular or clandestine marriages that were taking place, Parliament in 1753 passed new marriage laws. Some parishes immediately purchased register books containing printed forms to be completed by the parties concerned. The marriage register purchased by Rothwell Parish, Yorkshire,⁸ contains the following printed notice:

7. *The Victoria History of London*, London, 1909, pp. 363-364.

8. *The Registers of the Parish Church of Rothwell, Co. York, Part II, The Yorkshire Parish Register Society*, 1909.

A Register-Book for Marriages in all Parish Churches and Chapels conformable to an Act of the Twenty Sixth of King George II, Intitled, *An Act for the better Preventing of Clandestine Marriages.*

The new law was known as the "Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act" and it came into effect on 25 March 1754. In effect, it restricted the ceremony of marriage between the parties concerned to the parish of either the bride or the bridegroom, after the due publication of the *banns*⁹ or by means of a marriage licence.¹⁰ If they wanted to marry outside of their parish (or parishes) of residence, then a Special Licence¹¹ had to be obtained. This regulation of marriage lasted, with a few minor changes, until 1 July 1837, when a new system of Civil Registration came into effect.¹²

Prior to 1754, some marriages took place before Protestant Nonconformist ministers, Roman Catholic priests, Jewish rabbis and others, and were not entered in the Church of England parish registers. From 1754 until 1837, such marriages often took place in secret and were considered illegal. Sometimes the parties concerned went through a form of marriage ceremony in the Church of England in order to obtain a legal record of the marriage in the parish registers.¹³

Note the varying amount of information given in these few examples of marriages entered in parish registers:

Luxulyan, Cornwall.

22 April 1599 Henry Hawken and Jane his wife.

Saint Margaret's, Westminster (London).

18 April 1540 John Stevens.

Rothwell, Yorkshire.

1566 Feb. Rychard Store and Alys Flocton was married the 3rd die.

23 Jan. 1775 John Draper of Brigg in the Diocese of Lincoln, sailor and Mary Crowther, of this parish, by licence witnesses John Marshall, Thos. Hirst.

9. See Chapter 14, "Marriage Licences and The Intention To Marry," giving detailed information on the Publication of The Banns.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

12. See Chapter 4. "Civil Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages."

13. See Chapter 17 "The Roman Catholics," where reference is made to Roman Catholics marrying in the Church of England.

25 April 1779 Peter Thompson, miner of this parish and Ann Mann, widow of this parish, witnesses Joseph Townsley, Thos Hey

Saint Thomas, Southwark, Surrey (London).

James Maskal of the parish of Saint George, Southwark, Surrey, a bachelor and Esther Jackson of this parish, a widow. Married in this Church by Licence Seventh of November 1783

The mark x of James Maskal. The mark x of Esther Jackson. In the presence of Thomas Wescot, Nathaniel Harris.

Alverstoke, Hampshire.

James Gardiner of this parish and Maria Ansell of this parish married in this Church by *Banns* with consent of John Payne 18th February 1815.

James Gardiner. The mark x of Maria Ansell. In the presence of John Payne, Mary Payne.

Prior to 25 March 1754, the recorder of the entry of marriage usually gave scanty information. After that date more information was necessary, but before 1 July 1837 the names of parents were rarely entered in the marriage registers, and only occasionally are the ages and occupations recorded. In some localities one may find unusually helpful entries, but these are rather rare and must not be expected. Note the following:

Machynlleth, Montgomeryshire.

William Jones of this town, gentleman late shopkeeper, a widower and aged 57 years and

Catherine Humphreys, of the said town, spinster, daughter of the late Mr. Edward Humphreys, skinner, deceased, by Anne his wife. Aged 32 years.

Married the 4th January 1783 by *Licence*. In the presence of Humphrey Humphreys, Lewis Rowland.

Thomas William, a widower of this parish, son of William Rowland, laborer by Anne his wife. Aged 60 years. and

Jane William, a spinster of this parish, daughter of John William, a laborer, by Catherine his wife. Aged 18 years. Married the 2nd September 1783 by *banns* In the presence of David Pritchard, Lewis Rowland, Clark.

This last entry illustrates the system of patronymics found in many parts of Wales, as it will be noted that Thomas William is the son of *William* Rowland.

Stroud, Gloucestershire.

Samuel Clissold of the parish of Bisley, bachelor, son of Joseph Clissold and

Hannah Cook of this parish, spinster, daughter of Robert Cook. Married the 3rd October 1778 by licence.

James Cook of this parish, widower, son of James Cook and

Elizabeth Cratchley, this parish, widow, daughter of Thos. Bird. Married 13 April 1830 by banns

However, between 1754 and 1837 it is more than likely that the marriage records one will trace will give very little information. Note the following example:

Rothwell, Yorkshire.

7 November 1808 John Price and
by banns Charlotte Hartley, both of this parish.
Witnesses: Charles White, Harriot
Winn.

As the blank forms in the marriage registers from 1754 to 1837 provided spaces for the officiating minister or the parish clerk to record many details, one might come to the conclusion that too many of them were content to register the least amount of information possible.

III. Banns Books or Banns Registers.

It is rare that one will find any records of the Publications of the Banns (publication of the intention to marry) prior to 25 March 1754.¹⁴ From that date, under the provisions of the new Marriage Act, the Publications of the Banns were recorded. Some marriage registers kept thereafter have printed forms used for the recording of the marriage entry, with a part of the form set aside for the recording of the Publications of the Banns. In other types of registers, one-half of the bound volume contains forms for recording marriages and the other half contains forms for the recording of the Publications of the Banns. However, some parishes kept separate Banns Books or Banns Registers.

Whether the record of the banns was kept in the marriage register or in another book makes little difference, except that in parishes where the banns record was so kept,

14. See Chapter 14 "Marriage Licences and the Intention To Marry," giving detailed information.

the register has usually survived. In some parishes where the banns publications were recorded separately, the books were often discarded after they were full and became out of date. It is always a good plan to enquire if the records of the Publications of the Banns have survived, and if they have, to search them.

The following are a few examples:

Christ Church, Southwark, Surrey (London)

Banns Published between Thomas Godfrey, bachelor of this parish and Mary Rawlins, of the parish of Saint Marylebone, County Middlesex, spinster (On three several Sundays) 9th September 1810, 16th September 1810, 23rd September 1810.

The above entry in the banns register has no counterpart in the marriage register of the same parish. It would, therefore, be necessary to search the marriage registers of Saint Marylebone, Middlesex, in order to find out if the marriage was performed there.

Banns Published between John Robert Staples, bachelor and Eleanor Thomas spinster. (January 1809)

Forbidden by the Father of the woman on the ground of being under age.

As there is no marriage entry traced in the registers of the parish, the persons concerned may not have married, unless later they married in some other parish.

Llanglydwen, Carmarthenshire.

Banns Published between Lewis Evan of this parish and Martha David of Llanboidy Parish, on three several Sundays, (January 1757).

As there is no entry concerning the marriage in the Llanglydwen marriage registers, a search of the Llanboidy marriage registers disclosed the following:

Llanboidy, Carmarthenshire.

Banns Published between Lewis Evan of Llanglydwen parish and Martha David of this parish, on three several Sundays, (January 1757)

The above mentioned Lewis Evan of the parish of Llanglydwen and Martha David of this parish, were married in this Church by *banns*, this First day of February 1757

If the record of the Publication of the Banns had been overlooked in searching the parish registers at Llanglydwen, it would be quite difficult to trace the marriage of Lewis Evan.

IV. Burials:

The information usually found entered in the burial registers of the Church of England leaves much to be desired in the way of identification of the deceased. It was not until 1 January 1813 that all parishes were provided with registers that had blank forms that called for the recording of the deceased's residence and age at death. Prior to that date, the burials were often entered chronologically on the same pages as the baptisms and the marriages. In other parishes, the registers were divided into several sections, with the burials on different pages. Families could choose the burial ground in which to inter their dead, and some families, while having residence in one parish, buried their dead in another.

Note the varying amount of information given on these examples of entries taken from burial registers:

Penistone, Yorkshire

19 Mar 1663	Sarah daughter of John Charlesworth
16 Dec. 1712	Joseph Charlesworth
15 Feb 1763	Joseph Charlesworth from Burton, lost in the snow.
10 July 1813	John Charlesworth of Thurlstone, aged 61 years.

Stroud, Gloucestershire

21 Dec 1722	Widow Bennet
6 May 1741	Daughter of Giles Pitt
19 Jan 1741/2	Jane Ockey, widow.

Great Gaddesden, Hertfordshire

23 July 1766	An unbaptised child of William and Mary Field
13 May 1774	Mrs. Judith Halsey, affdt.
23 Nov 1822	George Lea, aged 75 years.

Llanidloes, Montgomeryshire

8 Feb 1804	Jane Owen aged 77 years
24 Mar 1806	Maria Rees, spinster, aged 26 years
17 Oct. 1799	Jane Brees
21 Mar 1806	Edward Brees aged 46 years

These entries are typical of those found throughout the country. The entry of 16 December 1712, at Penistone, does

not indicate whether Joseph Charlesworth was an adult or a child. The entry in 1722, at Stroud, does not disclose the given name of Widow Bennett, or the name of her late husband. The entry in 1741, at Stroud, gives no clue as to the name of the daughter of Giles Pitt who died. In the entry dated 1774, at Great Gaddesden, for Mrs. Judith Halsey, the abbreviation *affdt.* after her name indicates that an affidavit was made. The affidavit concerned the law which provided that:

. . . no corpse of any person (except those who shall die of the plague), shall be buried in any shirt, shift, sheet, or shroud or anything whatsoever made or mingled with flax, hemp, silk, hair, gold or silver, or in any stuff or thing, other than what is made of sheep's wool only . . .¹⁵

The amount of information entered in a burial entry seems to have been left to the discretion of the recorder. Because of such scanty information, one has to beware of accepting as a burial of an adult one that may refer to a child, and vice versa. (See PLATE II.)

The two following examples are common in East Anglia—Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge:

- 11 Sept. 1803 Sarah wife of John Cocksedge (late widow of John Coppin, late Sarah Wright).
- 13 Aug. 1802 Martha daughter of Joseph and Ann Burrows (late Ann Hunt).

Practically all the registering of births (as baptisms or christenings), marriages, and deaths (as burials), was attended to by the clergy until the Births and Deaths Registration Act and the Marriage Act, of 1836, which came into force in 1837.¹⁶ Although clergymen still officiate at, and record the events of baptisms, marriages and burials today, the births, marriages and deaths must also be registered before a civil registrar and the records kept at the local register office and a copy at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London.¹⁷

V. Handwriting In Parish Registers:

Handwriting in parish registers varies widely, according to the scholarship and penmanship of the registrar, whether

15. *The Parish Chest*, W. E. Tate, F. R. Hist S., Cambridge: The University Press, 1946.

16. See Chapter 4 "Civil Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths."

17. *Ibid.*

a parish clerk or clergyman. The period of time at which the register was compiled also has much to do with the handwriting. (See PLATE III and PLATE IV.) The *old style* handwriting is usually found prior to 1750, and is often difficult to decipher. In most parish registers one might search back to about 1725 without too much difficulty, but it is unwise to take chances. It is better to become acquainted with old handwriting by studying books on the subject and thus be prepared. Parts of some parish registers will be found written in Latin, but many parish ministers had ceased using that language long before 1735 when the law ordered that all legal documents be written in English. When records are faded or worn, as well as written in old style handwriting, the utmost perseverance is required to decipher and interpret them.

Page 6.

BURIALS in the Parish of <i>Sutton</i> in the County of <i>Lincoln</i> in the Year <i>1815</i>			
Name	Age	When buried	By whom buried
<i>Samuel Goodrick, Sutton</i>		<i>1815. August 1st</i>	<i>6. John Gellbank.</i>
No. 41.			
<i>Joseph Michael Sutton</i>		<i>1815. August 28th</i>	<i>John Spence. Carrington</i>
No. 42.			
<i>John Gellbank Wife of J. Gellbank Sutton</i>		<i>1815. Sept 10th</i>	<i>33. John Gellbank.</i>
No. 43.			
<i>William Skappell Sutton</i>		<i>1815. Dec 4th</i>	<i>3. John Gellbank.</i>
No. 44.			
<i>Anne Etheridge Sutton</i>		<i>1816. Dec 16th</i>	<i>John Gellbank.</i>
No. 45.			

PLATE II. Burial entries at Sutton, Lincolnshire, 1815-1816. Entries appear thus from most parish registers following 1 January 1813.

1598.

APRIL.

Anno	d. of Ellis Holto	2
Marie	d. of Matthew Nuttall	9
John	s. of John Ohlano	9
Roger	sommo of Samuel Kaye	16
Ellen	d. of John Hyne	16
Alis	d. of Rye Allens	23
Elizabeth	d. of Willino Haworth	23
Alis	d. of Thomas Lemax	30
Abell	s. of Edmund Kirkema	"

JUNE.

Thomas	s. of George Scholes	4
James & Robto	s. of Rye Lysaye	"
Margret	d. of Albano Nuttall	"
Anna	d. of John Ensworth	11
John	d. of Edmund Hardma	18
	s. of John Haworth	25

JULY.

Ellen	d. of Thomas Nuttall	2
Thomas	s. of Thomas Holto	"
Mihill	s. of Mihill Bentley	16
Samuel	s. of Thomas Holto	"
Hamlet	s. of Rye Lawe	"
Elizabeth	d. of Roger Kaye	"
Katharine	d. of Thomas Whytheode	23
Arthur	sommo of Thomas Rolytson	"
6 Ellyn	d. of Thomas Hunt supesed	"

AUGUST.

Elizabeth	d. of Thomas Walker	13
John	s. of Willino Heyn	29
Rye	s. of James Fletcher	"

PLATE III. Part of a page in Bury parish registers, Lancs.

PLATE IV. Printed copy of Bury parish registers relating to part of page shown in Plate III.

Anne d. of Rye Lysaye } v. 21. 1598.
 Marie d. of John Ohlano } v. 21. 1598.
 John s. of John Ohlano } v. 21. 1598.
 Roger sommo of Samuel Kaye } v. 21. 1598.
 Ellen d. of John Hyne } v. 21. 1598.
 Alis d. of Rye Allens } v. 21. 1598.
 Elizabeth d. of Willino Haworth } v. 21. 1598.
 Alis d. of Thomas Lemax } v. 21. 1598.
 Abell s. of Edmund Kirkema } v. 21. 1598.
 Thomas s. of George Scholes } v. 21. 1598.
 James & Robto s. of Rye Lysaye } v. 21. 1598.
 Margret d. of Albano Nuttall } v. 21. 1598.
 Anna d. of John Ensworth } v. 21. 1598.
 John d. of Edmund Hardma } v. 21. 1598.
 John s. of John Haworth } v. 21. 1598.
 Ellen d. of Thomas Nuttall } v. 21. 1598.
 Thomas s. of Thomas Holto } v. 21. 1598.
 Mihill s. of Mihill Bentley } v. 21. 1598.
 Samuel s. of Thomas Holto } v. 21. 1598.
 Hamlet s. of Rye Lawe } v. 21. 1598.
 Elizabeth d. of Roger Kaye } v. 21. 1598.
 Katharine d. of Thomas Whytheode } v. 21. 1598.
 Arthur sommo of Thomas Rolytson } v. 21. 1598.
 6 Ellyn d. of Thomas Hunt supesed } v. 21. 1598.
 Elizabeth d. of Thomas Walker } v. 21. 1598.
 John s. of Willino Heyn } v. 21. 1598.
 Rye s. of James Fletcher } v. 21. 1598.

Difficulties in interpreting place-names such as residences of persons mentioned in the parish registers may sometimes be overcome by making a thorough study of the topography and history of the parish. There are publications dealing exclusively with place-names in certain English counties.¹⁸ and in Wales.¹⁹

The beginning student of old handwriting might consult among others the following publications:

- i. *Examples of English Handwriting 1150-1750, with Transcripts and Translations*, published by the Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, Essex, England. Publication No 21. 1954.²⁰

It would be well for those intending to make an intensive study of handwriting to refer to the short list of books mentioned on page 33 of the above-named publication.

- ii. *A Guide for Genealogical Research* by Archibald F. Bennett. Deseret News Press, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1951. Pages 269-277 deal with English handwriting. There are also references to Latin and Welsh names and terms on pages 305-318, and Interpretation of Dates on pages 320-331.²¹
- iii. *The Amateur Historian*.²² This excellent magazine, which appears about six times a year is full of helpful information. Volume 1, pages 146-154, contains an article by W. Le HARDY, M.C., F.S.A., "How To Read 16th and 17th Century Handwriting."

A complete chapter on early handwriting will appear in a succeeding volume.

18. *The Publications of the English Place-Name Society, since 1924* Cambridge University Press.

19. *Gazetteer of Welsh Place-Names*. To be published in 1956 by the University, Cardiff, Wales.

20. Library call number: Essex Pub. C. No 21, at Library, Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City.

21. Library call number: R9B38. At Library, Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City.

22. *The Amateur Historian*, published by Terrick FitzHugh, Fernleigh, Manygate Lane, Shepperton on Thames, Middlesex, England. (1952-)

Chapter Eleven

LAWS RELATING TO THE KEEPING OF PARISH REGISTERS

IT is helpful to know why parish registers were kept in a particular way during one period of time and another way for another period. Various acts or statutes of Parliament were made, and are explained briefly in this chapter. These acts represent periods of imperfect records as well as improved record keeping. The reaction of the population should also be kept in mind, as they were skeptical about innovations that might be instituted for the purpose of obtaining more tax money from them.

- 1538 Thomas Cromwell, Vicar-General to Henry VIII issued an injunction to all parish ministers to keep registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials under penalty of a fine. Many ministers commenced registers in 1538, but others did not comply immediately, consequently some registers commence at later dates.
- 1547 The above injunction reiterated by Edward VI.
- 1559 The above injunction re-enforced by Queen Elizabeth I.
- 1597 The Act of 1597 was to enforce the Act of 1538 and make provision for the safer keeping of parish registers. This was because many ministers were not keeping registers, while those registers which had been kept were in poor condition, having been written on paper. Provision was made for the keeping of better and more permanent registers. Every minister was to copy the existing registers into a new book of parchment pages and continue to do so, keeping the registers in a safe place. In the existing registers it can be seen that in many instances the registers from 1538-1598 are written in the same hand, because the minister in 1598 re-wrote all of the previous entries into the new parchment book. Of course, this rule was not



A Country Parish Church.
For many centuries the home of the

complied with in every case so that many registers now begin in 1598, and the earlier paper book not having been copied, has perished. This Act also made it necessary for the minister to send annually a copy of the year's events to the Bishop of the Diocese and these copies are known as Bishop's Transcripts.¹ In some localities these transcripts were delivered to the archdeacon and in those instances are known as Archdeacon's Transcripts.

- 1603 A further Act was passed reiterating the previous Acts.
- 1648-1660 The Civil War commenced in 1642, and Charles I was beheaded in 1649; Oliver Cromwell became the Lord Protector. This period is known as the *Interregnum* and is a difficult genealogical period, because of the imperfection of the registers. Many ministers of the Church of England had to leave their parishes, particularly if they were staunch Royalists. Some are believed to have buried the registers for safety, in which cases apparently not all of them were unearthed when the monarchy was restored. Cromwellian soldiers and others plundered the churches destroying everything having the appearance of Popery, including, in some instances, parish registers. From 1653-1660 the records were kept by a registrar or a preacher appointed by the government, or by the existing incumbent if he was considered suitable, or if the parish was in an out-of-the-way place not seriously affected by the political and religious upheavals taking place.
- 1653 By the Act of 1653, the Justice of the Peace was appointed to perform civil marriages, with a parish clerk to record all births, marriages, and deaths. The sole right to marry persons was taken from the ministers of the Church until 1660.
- 1660 The Commonwealth came to an end in this year, and Charles II was crowned king. Many parish ministers and civil registrars who had held *livings* during the Commonwealth were ejected and the former incumbent (or his successor) was inducted to the *living*. From the foregoing it can be seen that in many par-

1. See also Chapter 13, "Bishop's Transcripts and Their Value."

ishes, the registers during this period were either poorly kept or not kept at all. On the other hand it is reported that some of the record keepers of the period kept commendable records.

A good way to determine if the records were well kept in this period is to compare the entries per year with the number of entries of a few years before and after the *Interregnum*.

- 1665- This was the period of the Great Plague that was es-
- 1666 pecially felt in London and in certain large towns. This caused an increase in recorded burials.
- 1666 The Great Fire of London also took place in 1666 and many parish churches together with their registers were destroyed.
- 1680 In the reign of Charles II an Act was passed which was designed to benefit the wool trade. All the dead were to be buried in wool, a fine being imposed for non-compliance. This Act continued until 1814. When a burial took place, a relative or some other person made affidavit that the burial was in woollen. In many parish registers, *Affid* or *Affdt* can be seen after many burial entries although the practice fell out of use long before 1814.
- 1693 An Act was passed taxing all entries in parish registers, but a few years later the act was repealed as certain persons, in order to avoid taxation, were not having their children christened.
- 1715- The strife caused by the Old and the New Pretend-
- 1745 er to the throne had no effect on the parish registers, except in those parishes on the main route taken by the Scottish rebels.
- 1752 Until 1752, the year began on "Ladyday," which was the 25th of March, the last day of the year being the 24th of March. An Act of Parliament changed the commencement of the year to the 1st of January and since the 1st of January 1752 this is the calendar that we have used.²

2. For additional information on the interpretation of dates, see *A Guide for Genealogical Research*, Archibald F. Bennett, Salt Lake City, The Genealogical Society, 1951, which contains in Appendix IV, pp. 320-331, information on the calendars and feast days and the reigns of the English monarchs. Also see *Handbook of Dates for Students of English History*, edited by C. R. Cheney, London, The Royal Historical Society, 1955.

As an example of dating prior to the change, 31 December, 1683 is followed by 1st January 1683 and the year 1683 continues until 24 March 1683. The next day is 25 March 1684. Such dates rendered for genealogical purposes are:

31 December	1683	
1 January	1683/4	} Known as Double Dating
24 March	1683/4	
25 March	1684	

It is important that the dates be written this way in order to avoid confusion.

- 1754 The Marriage Act of Lord Hardwicke became law on 25 March 1754. Previous to this Act, marriages were usually entered in the same volume as the baptisms and burials. No signatures of the contracting persons were necessary. In fact, in many of the marriage entries prior to 1754, the bare entries of the two names were recorded, although one or both of them may have been widowed, or from another parish. An example of how deceiving such entries can be is shown elsewhere in this book.

The new Act passed in 1753 and enforced in 1754 required that separate registers be kept for marriages, the entries to be written in a special register consisting of printed forms, which called for the signature of the officiating minister, signatures of two witnesses, signature of the bride and groom, and whether they were bachelor, spinster, widow or widower, and the parish of residence of both.

The marriage could not take place unless banns had been called in the parish of residence of both persons for three successive weeks, or unless a licence was granted by the surrogate or by the bishop. Marriages ceased in parochial chapelries from this time until 1837 unless specially approved. It is always wise to search for the publications of banns as they sometimes give a little extra information. The banns are often recorded in the marriage entry itself, or in the same volume on separate pages, or in a separate volume. After 1812, banns always appear in separate volumes.

*The 1831 Parish Register Abstract*³ is useful in determining which chapelries do not have marriage registers after 1754.

- 1783 This year, a stamp duty or 3d. (three pence) on every entry recorded in the parish registers was imposed. This Act was repealed ten years later, probably because the population was not having the baptisms of their children recorded. It is also possible that inasmuch as the only persons exempted from the tax were paupers, it is believed that some persons deliberately marked entries "pauper" or left entries out entirely, in order to avoid payment of the tax. It is to be hoped that not too many entries were omitted during this ten-year period. (See Figure 1.)
- 1812 George Rose's Act, 1812, brought about a new form of recording baptisms, marriages, and burials. Separate volumes were required for each, and were of uniform size and contained blank forms which were completed as the events took place. The register for marriages allowed three marriages a page, the register for burials eight entries to a page, and the baptismal register eight to a page. This Act meant that a more orderly system of recording could be carried out, but the forms themselves did not call for as much information as some of the clerks had been recording previously. The baptisms and burials are still entered on the same type of form, but the marriage records were greatly improved in 1837.
- 1837 Civil Registration at the local register offices and at the General Register Office, Somerset House, commenced 1 July 1837. Although the events could still be recorded in parish registers, the law required that all births, marriages, and deaths be registered civilly. Complete information on this source is given in Chapter 4, "Civil Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages."
- 1853 Because the population in many towns had grown tremendously, an Act of Parliament was passed that permitted the opening of new cemeteries and the closing

3. Parish Register Abstract, 1831, *op. cit.*



FIG. 1. "Record us as *paupers*, Vicar, we can't afford to pay the duty."
(See page 161 concerning the Stamp Duty of 3d. imposed as a tax on all entries in parish registers.)

of many of the town churchyards that were full. For this reason many parishes in towns have no burial registers after 1853 or some other date later than 1853 when the churchyard was closed. Burials would then take place in municipal or private cemeteries and the records of the interments would be kept there and not in the registers at the parish church.

Chapter Twelve

HOW TO USE PARISH REGISTERS

WHOEVER engages in research in parish registers should spend a few minutes reading about the locality in which the search is to be made. This rule applies not only to searches in original registers at a parish church, but also to searches in the Bishop's Transcripts and in handwritten, printed, or microfilm copies of parish registers found in record offices and libraries. Trying to solve a problem without any method or system, and depending on chance for success will not lead to satisfactory results. Therefore, before even searching a parish register, one must write down an analysis



"Wintertime in the unheated Parish Church Vestry — 'Old Mortality' continues his search of the original registers."

of the problem. This might include brief answers to several questions similar to the following:

- i. What is known about the ancestral line connected with the parish? What periods of time are involved? What places within the parish may be of consequence, such as names of farms, streets, hamlets, villages, townships? Are the occupations of some of the members of the family known?
- ii. What are the important new particulars being sought? Are they baptisms, marriages, burials, or the publications of banns? Is it likely that there may be tombstone inscriptions available?
- iii. Is a good description available of the extent of the parish and its registers? Are there any good maps of the locality?

Description of the extent of a parish.

Considerable information concerning parishes has already been given.¹ As an example of learning more about a parish and its extent, consider Doncaster, Yorkshire, a moderately-sized town. How much information can be found about it? The important features will be the names of places within the parish, the number of inhabitants and their occupations, and a description of the parish registers.

- i. Doncaster, municipal borough, market town and parish, . . . 32 miles south of York . . . population 72,272; ecclesiastical districts Christ Church, St. George, St. James, St. Jude, St. Mary. Has railway locomotive and carriage works.²

The above information, taken from a 1950 publication, is not of great help and may be misleading. It does help one to locate Doncaster on a map of Yorkshire, but the pedigree may have already been traced back to a date before 1837, and the above description might not apply to the situation a century ago.

- ii. Doncaster, a parish comprising the borough and market town of Doncaster . . . the townships of Balby-with-Hexthorp, and Long Sandal with Wheatley . . . and Langthwaite with Tilts . . . (in) the West Riding of the County of York, and containing 9,117 inhabitants . . . 37 miles (S by W) from York . . . Doncaster has but little trade or manufacture. There are two or three cast-iron found-

1. See Chapter 9, "The Parish and its Administration."

2. *A Survey Gazetteer of the British Isles*, John Bartholomew, Edinburgh: 1950 ed.

ries, and a sacking and twist manufactory, but all on a very small scale . . . Wool market . . . corn-market . . . meat (market) . . . (and a market) for the sale of fowls, butter, eggs, fish, vegetables, and fruit.

The living is a vicarage, in the archdeaconry and diocese of York . . . The Church (is) dedicated to St. George . . . There are places of worship for the Society of Friends, Independents, Presbyterians, and Wesleyan Methodists.³

The above descriptions taken from publications printed over one hundred years apart, are worth comparison.

Note how the information taken from the publication dated 1831 clearly indicates the extent of the parish. It was a parish with less than ten thousand inhabitants and very little industry. One might conclude that the parish registers are fairly large; that references will be found in them to persons engaged in the principle occupations and residing in the various townships mentioned. It is also apparent that in 1831 there was but one parish church (St. George's Church); that the incumbent (parish minister) was a Vicar; and that Doncaster was within the jurisdiction of the Archdeaconry and Diocese of York.⁴ If there is any reason to believe that the ancestors were Nonconformists⁵ the note regarding other places of worship is of great interest.

In addition to the information quoted, the *Topographical Dictionary* also mentions the ancient Roman and Saxon sites upon which the town was built; a history of the growth of the municipality, and other interesting details, that are not of great consequence at this stage of research.

Description of the parish registers.

The *Parish Register Abstract*⁶ lists all parish registers that date prior to 1813. Under the West Riding of County York will be found the following information:

3. A *Topographical Dictionary of England*, Samuel Lewis, 4 vols. London: 1831 edition. This Dictionary includes Monmouthshire, but for Welsh places, see *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales*, 2 Vols. London: 1833 edition.
4. It is important to note the ecclesiastical jurisdiction within which places (towns, parishes, chapelries, townships) are situated, as such a jurisdiction is necessary to know when seeking marriage licence bonds and allegations, Bishop's Transcripts, probate records, etc.
5. See Chapter 15, "The Nonconformists, their History and Records."
6. *Parish Register Abstract*, 1831, (London: Published by the House of Commons, 1833). Doncaster, volume numbers VI-VIII burials 1757 to 1812 as quoted is a typographical error in the publication, as there are burial registers for Doncaster 1699 to 1756, as well as those indicated.

<i>Doncaster. V.</i>	Nos. I-III contain Baptisms	1557-1812
	No. IV Burials	1557-1684
	interrupted by No. V	1678-1698
	Nos. VI-VIII Burials	1757-1812 ⁶
	Nos. XI-XIII Marriages	1577-1812

The *Key to the Ancient Parish Registers*⁷ indicates the first date found in the parish registers, as follows:

Doncaster, York. 1557.

If a history of a parish has been published, or the registers copied and printed, there may be a further description of the records. A search in the card catalogue in the Library of the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, show that the marriage registers 1557 to 1837 for Doncaster have been printed. In the "Preface" to the publication will be found:

The Doncaster Registers have literally passed through the fire, and been burned. In their present condition they are truly a memorial of the courage and daring of those who rescued them from the fire, and of the exceeding patience, skill and devotion of those who had a hand in their restoration.⁸

Then follows a description of the registers that had been restored, rebound, transcribed, and repaired. This publication also states that Doncaster comprises the hamlets or districts of Balby, Carr House, Elmfield, Hexthorpe, Langthwaite, Tylse, and Wheatley. This is more informative than the description quoted from Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary*.

Information about a parish and its original registers, such as is given for Doncaster, is of importance to the researcher.

Maps should be used.

It is always wise to locate on a good map the parish and the places connected with it as described in the books of reference. In Lewis's *A Topographical Dictionary* (of England or of Wales) there are maps for all the counties of Eng-

7. *Key To The Ancient Parish Registers of England and Wales*, A. M. Burke, London, 1908.

8. *Yorkshire Marriage Registers, West Riding, vol III, Doncaster 1557-1837*, London: Phillimore & Co. 1915.

land and Wales, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man. Reproductions of these maps have been made.⁹

These maps show England and Wales as they were before the railways, modern highways, and the increase of the population changed the face of the country. A map is useful to familiarize the searcher with the names of the villages and towns surrounding a parish.¹⁰ Such places will be recognized when they are found mentioned in the parish registers.

Parish Registers.¹¹

There are five kinds of parish registers and parish register copies:

- (i) The original parish registers.¹²
- (ii) Contemporary copies generally known as Bishop's Transcripts.¹³
- (iii) A transcript copy, either handwritten or typewritten.
- (iv) A printed copy of the original registers. Some of these contain additional notes relating to the parish and its registers.
- (v) A microfilm copy. This may be a copy of the original registers; the Bishop's Transcripts; the handwritten, typescript, or printed copies. There are also a few photographic copies of parish registers.

There is one kind of parish register copy that is very misleading. The copy may have a title such as, "The Parish Register of Middlewich 1613-1812." Upon examination it may be found to contain extracts of entries relating to certain families only, and is thus not a copy of the entire parish register. One must be careful of such copies with inaccu-

9. The Atlas connected with Lewis's *Topographical Dictionaries* is to be found on the library reference shelf at the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City. The Atlas for England includes Monmouthshire, and the library call number is R10A11. For Wales the library call number is R10A8. There is also an enlargement of these maps on the reference shelf. Reproductions of the county maps for England and Wales, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man are available at the *Research Department* of the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City. Each county or island map is sold separately for 25 cents each. Excellent modern maps, on a scale of two-miles to the inch, issued in sections, are obtainable through bookstores or direct from John Bartholomew & Son, Ltd., of Edinburgh, Scotland; or "Geographia" Ltd., 167 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4 England.

10. A chapter dealing with "Topography, Geography, and Maps" will appear in a later volume.

11. See Chapter 10, "The Parish Registers."

12. *Ibid.*

13. See Chapter 13, "Bishop's Transcripts And Their Value."

rate titles. Unless the copy contains a complete list of all the entries from the parish registers relating to the family being sought, such partial copies are of no practical value. Information is given later in this chapter concerning printed parish registers that may have misleading titles.

Where may parish registers be found?

The original registers (discussed at length later in this chapter), are usually in the custody of the parish minister or deposited in a diocesan or county record office.¹⁴ Farsighted clergymen have, in some instances, permitted copies to be made of parish registers, not only to preserve the record against loss of the originals, but also so that the information may be easily available for study. Having found the description of the parish and its registers, one may now attempt to ascertain whether there are any copies of the parish registers available.

Libraries are the first places to check.¹⁵ If the town (borough), city, or county libraries do not have copies of the records desired, then one might consider the national, provincial, or state libraries. In England and Wales there are also diocesan and county record offices, and most important, libraries of societies devoted to the collection of genealogical and historical records. In London there is the amazing collection of over 20,000 books and 10,000 manuscripts in the library of The Society of Genealogists.¹⁶ This is undoubtedly the greatest collection assembled by a private association in England. There are also a number of parish registers and record societies. They are usually on a county basis, have private libraries, and sometimes the collections are housed in a public library for convenience. If one's pedigree lies in a particular county, it is wise to support the associations and societies of the locality so that their work of preserving and copying records will continue and not be curtailed because of insufficient financial support. Several groups have already

14. A Chapter on "*Libraries, Societies, and Record Offices*" is planned for a later volume.

15. *Ibid.*

16. The Society of Genealogists, 37 Harrington Gardens, London, S. W. 7., which also publishes an excellent magazine *The Genealogists' Magazine*.

been compelled to stop publishing because of insufficient funds.¹⁷

By far the largest and best collections in America of copies of English and Welsh parish registers and Bishop's Transcripts are to be found in the Library of the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The contents of parish register copies and Bishop's Transcripts (as well as the originals), include varying periods of christenings (baptisms and births), marriages and the publications of banns, burials (deaths). Some copyists have transcribed all the entries within a given period, and others have confined their copying to christenings only, marriages only, or burials only. The most common copies are of marriages. An examination of a library catalogue will show for example, the following types of register copies:

i. *County Sussex. Brighton Parish Registers 1558-1701.*

Obviously, if one were seeking record of a family residing in Brighton about 1797, this copy register would not help.

ii. *Yorkshire. Barwick-in-Elmet Parish Registers 1600-1812, including abstracts from wills and tombstone inscriptions.*

A marriage record, thought to be dated about 1825, would not be found in this copy register. It might be wise, however, to search through the parish register copy to see if the family surname appears. When additional material is included (e.g.) wills and tombstone inscriptions, these should be examined.

iii. *Lincolnshire. Willoughby Register of Marriages 1538-1837.*

A search through this printed volume of marriages would help to determine if the family surname appears, and a list of such entries might be made for future reference, but the book would be of no immediate value if the records being sought were christenings and burials.

iv. *London. Parish Registers of St. Dunstan-in-the-East, London, 1558-1691.*

17. The Preface to volumes 84-85 of The Publications of The Harleian Society of London (1954-1955) reads: "The Register Section of the Society is at present running at a slight loss. Even so, the present cost of printing severely limits the number of pages which can be included in a volume." In 1936 the Harleian Society published volume 66 with over 400 pages, but in 1954 to 1955 could only afford to publish a volume of 150 pages for the two years!

Here is a copy of the registers of an important London parish 1558-1691. It might be too early for the record of a family residing in the locality around 1700, but it would be worth checking to see if there is any mention of the family.

v. Cheshire. *Goostrey Marriage Registers 1733 to 1840.*

This copy, covering marriages only from 1733 to 1840 might mislead the unwary. The title gives the impression that the original registers start with 1733, whereas they commence in 1561. The copyist confined his work to this later period, and if one were seeking a marriage record dated about 1675, it would be necessary to check the original registers or some other copy covering the period concerned.

vi. Lancashire. *The Register of Burtonwood Chapel in the Parish of Warrington 1668-1837.*

Actually the printed book contains christenings 1668 to 1837, marriages 1683 to 1750 and burials 1783 to 1837, periods not mentioned precisely in the title of the publication. By reading the *Introduction* to this volume,¹⁸ one finds that there are no other parish registers or Bishop's Transcripts (prior to 1837) than those contained in the printed copy. One also learns that Burtonwood was a parochial chapelry in the ancient parish of Warrington, and it is likely that the mother-parish church registers of Warrington contain information relating to Burtonwood residents.

vii. Westmorland. *Bishop's Transcripts of Kirkby Lonsdale in the Archdeaconry of Westmorland and Diocese of Carlisle, 1676-1874.*

viii. Somersetshire. *Bishop's Transcripts at Wells, 1605, 1616, 1621, 1636, and 1678 [for the parish of] Wanstrow. (Dwelly's Parish Records, Volume 2).*¹⁹

ix. Flintshire, Wales. *Dyserth [Parish]. Bishop's Transcripts of the Diocese of Saint Asaph to [the year] 1850.*

x. Pembrokeshire, Wales. *Bishop's Transcripts of Burton [Parish] 1799-1873.*

Additional information concerning the contents of Bishop's Transcripts (Items VII to X above) is given elsewhere.²⁰

18. *The Register of Burtonwood Chapel*, printed for the Lancashire Parish Register Society as volume 84. (Preston: 1945).

19. *Dwelly's Parish Records*, E. Dwelly, F. S. G., 1913-1922.

20. See Chapter 13, "Bishop's Transcripts and Their Value."

Whether the record is a printed book, a manuscript, or a microfilm copy, *it has to be examined* in order to determine whether it is as complete as stated in the catalogue or other listing.

(I) The original parish registers cannot personally be searched unless a visit is paid to the place where they are deposited. Even then it is not always easy to obtain access to the registers. They are usually in the care of the parish minister (vicar or rector) and kept under lock and key at the old parish church or residence of the clergyman. Some are lodged for safekeeping in Diocesan and County Record Offices.²¹ Before visiting a parish or a record office, it is essential that a letter be sent there explaining that the family were residents of the parish and that a personal visit is intended. The letter should request permission to search the parish registers, and ask whether the registers are available for the periods concerned. The letter should also contain an offer to pay a reasonable fee and a suggestion that an arrangement for a convenient appointment would be welcomed. If the parish is a long distance from a town, it might be well to ask for schedule information on local buses or trains. Without a prior appointment, one might arrive in the parish to find that the registers are lost or are not kept there, or that the official in charge of them is not available or that he is unwilling to make the registers accessible. Some record offices require that an application to search be submitted three days beforehand, stating the object of the enquiry.²²

The following are examples of fruitless endeavors by poor planning:

- i. A railroad and bus trip was made from London to Bromsgrove (Worcestershire) a distance of more than ninety miles. The purpose was to search the marriage records circa 1760. Upon arrival, it was discovered that the marriage register for 1754 to 1773 had been lost.²³
- ii. A visit was paid to Turvey, Bedfordshire. The ancestral marriage entry was easily traced, dated 25 December 1828,

21. A chapter dealing with "Libraries, Societies, Record Offices," will appear in a later volume.

22. See, *Guide To The Essex Record Office*, part II (1948) page 135, where information on the regulations governing the Essex County Record Office is given. (In the Library of the Genealogical Society, call number Essex Pub. C No 2).

23. The search in Bromsgrove took place several years ago. The register that was missing at that time may now have been found, and a further enquiry might verify this.

for Samuel Freeman and Ann Wallinger. What is presumed to be their burials were traced, Samuel Freeman in 1870 aged 64 years, therefore born about 1806; and his wife Ann in 1837 aged 26 years, therefore born about 1811.

Thus, in less than one hour after commencing the search, the clergyman was asked for his parish register covering 1800 to 1812. No register of christenings could be found covering 1804 to 1812, the vital period. Thus the birth (or christening) records could not be searched for Samuel Freeman and Ann Wallinger, and the visitor to the parish had to be content with but one hour of searching out of a whole day. As the parish minister had not been notified beforehand as to the registers that were required, he was in no position to warn the visitor that a register was missing.²⁴

- iii. Some years ago a fruitless trip was made to Ribchester, Lancashire, to find that the registers prior to 1813 had been lodged in the County Records Office at Preston. If the parish minister had known that the visitor intended to search pre-1813 records, he could have referred the enquirer to the County Records Office.²⁵

The size of the population within a parish affects the size and arrangement of the registers, and this is one reason why it is first necessary to know something about the description and extent of the parish and its registers. Broadly speaking there are three different sizes of parishes:

- (i) Very small
- (ii) Average size
- (iii) Large

An example of a very small parish is Moreton Jeffries, Herefordshire, that had a population in 1811 of 69 inhabitants. This had decreased by 1851 to 49 inhabitants. Obviously, the parish registers of a small parish will be small. The registers prior to 1754 are usually chronological lists of christenings, marriages, and burials, entered in the sequence they occurred. From 1754 the marriage entries may be entered in a separate volume, but the christenings and burials continue

24. Turvey Parish Registers. The parish minister was disturbed by the discovery that a register was missing. A few days later he thoroughly explored all the cupboards in the parish church. The register of baptisms and burials for 1804 to 1812 was found on the shelf of a cupboard. It had been placed there, and forgotten, because it was too large to fit into the parish church safe. It is stressed that if he had known of the temporary loss before the visit to the parish, he might have found the register and had it ready for the search on the day the visit was made.

25. See Note 21.

to be entered together. From 1st January 1813, the baptisms, marriages, and burials are usually entered in different volumes. In some years the registers may have no records of christenings, marriages, and burials because no such events occurred within the parish.

An example of a parish of average size is Bishops Frome, Herefordshire. This could also be called a "country parish" as there are no large manufactories or industries in the locality. The place had a population in 1831 of 1,041. Another example of an average sized parish is St. Peters in the town of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire. This could be called a "town parish" as its population lived in a part of the Town of Nottingham where there are many factories and other industrial pursuits. St. Peter's parish had a population in 1831 of 5,234. It is common in parishes such as these to find the early registers divided into three parts, baptisms at the front, marriages entered in the middle pages, and burials entered at the back of the book which is reversed for that purpose. This method lasted until the year 1754 when the marriages were entered in the separate marriage register kept from that year, but the baptisms and burials continued to be entered in the existing register as before. From the 1st January 1813, separate registers were kept for baptisms, marriages, and burials. In some parishes of average size, one may find separate volumes for baptisms, marriages, and burials from quite an early date.

In Wales and Monmouthshire most of the "country parishes" are small. Vaynor, Breconshire, with a population in 1831 of 1,933 inhabitants might be considered fairly small.²⁶ The neighboring parish of Merthyr Tydfil, Glamorganshire, with a population in 1831 of 22,083 is a large parish. As there were many Nonconformists²⁷ residing in the Welsh parishes, it is not uncommon to find many more entries of marriages than entries of christenings for the same period in the parish registers. This condition is also found in English parishes where there were large numbers of Dissenters. This is because the Nonconformists did not have their children christened in the Church of England parish, although they were married in the parish church.

26. Vaynor, Breconshire. The parish registers were destroyed by fire many years ago, but there are Bishop's Transcripts still extant.

27. See Chapter 15, "The Nonconformists, their History and Records."

Ripon, Yorkshire is an example of a large parish. The ancient parish of Ripon covers a large area containing over thirty townships, with a population in 1831 of 14,699. Most of the localities outside of this small city comprise outlying farming communities, and the parish registers, kept at Ripon Cathedral are large. Another large parish is St. Mary's in the Town of Nottingham, Notts., the population of which, in 1831, was 39,539. The registers of St. Mary's, Nottingham, are much larger than those for Ripon. The number of baptisms at St. Mary's in 1800 was more than 1,000.

Probably the largest parish registers in England and Wales are those kept at the Cathedral, Manchester. In 1831, there were 270,963 inhabitants in Manchester, of whom 142,026 resided in the township of Manchester, or that part of Manchester Town that is close to the parish's business and residential areas. Although there were several parish churches in Manchester, most of the christenings, marriages, and burials took place at the oldest church, formerly known as the "Parish and Collegiate Church" of Manchester, and now the "Cathedral." In the ten years, 1822-1831, over 23,000 marriages took place at this church. To search through the record of one year in the baptisms may take as long as one hour. In one day's work of eight hours, one might search ten or twelve years of baptisms, therefore taking several days to search for one generation! In some of the thickly inhabited and popular parishes of the London area, similar large registers are to be found. The same is true with large population centers such as Liverpool, Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In most parishes the registers do not have an index. If they do, experience has shown that some of the indexes are incomplete and therefore unreliable.

No experienced genealogist would travel a distance to search parish registers (whether in churches, record offices, or libraries) without first writing down all essential facts about the pedigree and the parish, and taking into consideration the possible types of parish registers that may have to be searched. If correspondence has disclosed that all the parish registers are at one place, (either at the parish church or in a record office), the problem may then be to gain access to the records and search them in correct order, according to the research plan made previous to the visit. If the early registers are at a record office and the later regis-

ters are at the parish church, there may have to be an alteration of the plan so as to fit the conditions.

In searching original (as well as copy) parish registers, there are a number of pitfalls, a few of which are as follows:

- i. *Entries may be recorded out of sequence.* When searching baptisms for instance, one may come to the end of a page, and upon turning to the next page, find that it is a record of marriages. The parish minister may have continued the baptisms elsewhere in the volume. He might have "backtracked" several pages to a blank space, wherein he entered a few baptisms, or have "skipped" a few pages of marriages and burials until he found a blank space, perhaps on a page headed "Burials", and therein entered baptisms for an entirely different year than the burials.

This same thing has happened when the clergyman has been recording marriages and burials. Sometimes, by error, a single baptismal entry appears chronologically among the burials, or among the marriages, or vice versa.

- ii. *Blank pages in registers* are often very misleading. Upon coming to the end of a record which is followed by blank pages, it is folly to assume that there is nothing further in the volume, even though the last few pages may also be blank. Occasionally one may find entries entered in the middle pages of the book, or even odd entries scattered on pages throughout the volume. It is wise to examine each page of the book, whether it is blank or not.
- iii. *Misleading Titles.* On the front (or the back) of a volume may appear a title. This may be accurate insofar as the title may imply, for example, "Baptisms 1776 to 1803". But there may be within the volume, additional records as well, perhaps of other years and of marriages and burials. Some registers with the title of *Banns of Marriages* may also contain records of marriages, while some with the title of *Marriages* may contain also the *Publication of the Banns*.
- iv. *Overlapping Registers.* Some parishes have registers which overlap as regards dates. For instance at Saint Luke, Old Street, Finsbury, London, a set of baptismal registers covers 1813 to 1841, then there is a special register, containing entirely different entries, for 1822 to 1841, marked *Supplementary Register of Baptisms*. This special register was to record entries of baptisms that were privately solemnized in the parish.

- v. *Handwriting*. Interpretation of handwriting is according to the experience and adeptness of the searcher.²⁸
- vi. *Hard to detect* are those entries which may appear at odd places in the volume, such as inside the front or back cover, or written vertically in the right or left hand margins of the pages. Sometimes the pages in parish registers have come away from the binding of the volume and are out of order. At least one parish register is reported to have been cut in half and rebound as two volumes.

Those who request clergymen to make searches in the parish registers might bear in mind that the person who makes the search may not be aware of the many pitfalls. In defense of the parish minister, one must realize that he cannot be expected to take too much interest in the search, when he has to attend to many other important and pressing matters associated with his own parish.

Should it be necessary to search the original parish registers, of which the marriages (or other parts) have been printed, say for 1538 to 1812, it is first very wise to search the printed marriage register, and list all entries where the pedigree surnames appear. Later, when searching the original (or microfilm copies of the original) parish registers, spend some time going through the marriages (*even though they have been printed*) and try to find additional details that may have been omitted by the compiler of the printed register. Occasionally a transcriber of parish registers is not always aware of the spelling for surnames that appear in the parish registers. He may mis-interpret the spelling of a surname, and *Turk* may appear in print as *Lurk*; *Tennison* as *Jennison*, *Juchau* as *Jachan*, *Lamport* as *Tampord*, *Boud* as *Bond*, *Cock* as *Cook*, to name but a very few possibilities.

If one has planned beforehand and listed the entries from the parish registers in a systematic way, it will be easy to make notes regarding any portion of the registers that are missing or illegible. Then, when the data available is analyzed, it is an easy matter to list the dates or periods which were lost or could not be read. Armed with such information it may then be possible to trace whether any Bishop's Transcripts exist for the years covering the missing details.

(II) The Bishop's Transcripts are contemporary copies of the parish registers, and the information from them

28. See Chapter 10, "The Parish Registers."

A chapter on "Reading Early English Script" is planned for a later volume.

is of as great a value. The original Bishop's Transcripts are usually in the care of the diocesan authorities, or in the county record office, museum or library. Some are in unusual places, like those for the Diocese of Durham that are kept at Durham University.²⁹ Wherever the records may be, great care must be exercised in handling them as well as copying details from them.³⁰

Unless one spends time obtaining a good description of the extent of the parish and its registers, searching the Bishop's Transcripts will not be entirely satisfactory. It has already been pointed out that to trace the whereabouts of the original Bishop's Transcripts it is essential to know the ecclesiastical jurisdiction within which the parish concerned was situated.³¹

If the Bishop's Transcripts have been copied and are available in libraries, they will usually appear catalogued under the name of the parish in the county concerned, as shown earlier in this chapter. However, Bishop's Transcripts are often incomplete, that is, there are many years missing, and one has to use the catalogues in libraries with caution.

(III) When original parish registers have been transcribed in a scholarly manner, care having been taken to interpret correctly the original handwriting, handwritten, type-written, or printed copies serve the same purpose as the originals. Copies are usually easy to read because the difficulties of interpreting faded, old style handwriting have been removed. Instead of handling original books in distant parishes, one can inspect comfortably the copy in a library. Moreover, when the copies contain reliable indexes, the time taken to make a search is reduced to a minimum. However, all copies and especially indexes must be used with caution. The following are some of the pitfalls to be avoided:

- A. Parish registers with incorrect titles often mis-lead the unwary. For instance, the Lancashire Parish Register Society published in 1910 *The Registers Of The Parish Of Walton-le-Dale In The County Of Lancaster, Baptisms, Burials and Marriages 1609-1812*. This volume contains an

29. A chapter dealing with the disposition of the Bishop's Transcripts for each county is planned for a later volume.

30. See Chapter 13 "Bishop's Transcripts And Their Value."

A chapter on "Planning Methodical Research" is planned for a later volume.

31. This is fully explained in Chapter 13.

exhaustive index to the names of all persons mentioned in it.

i. If one were seeking the christening of *Ellen Southworth*, born in Walton-le-Dale, 20th August 1809, one would turn to the index in the printed volume covering 1609-1812 and *find no reference to her name*. It is then possible that one would presume that she was christened after 1812, or perhaps in another parish!

The printed parish register should be examined very carefully, where it would easily be discovered that, despite the title page stating the book contained baptisms, marriages, and burials, 1609 to 1812, it actually contained baptisms and burials from the Bishop's Transcripts from 1609 to 1641 and from the original parish register from 1653 to December 1808, marriages from the Bishop's Transcripts 1609 to 1641 and from the original parish registers from 1654 to December 1812.

The years that are missing include the year 1809 in which *Ellen Southworth* was born! When the original parish registers for 1809 to 1812 were searched, there was discovered the following entry:

Chr. 1 Oct. 1809 Ellen, daughter of Ralph & Eliz. Southworth, born 20 August 1809.

How many researchers confine their searching to an index? If that is the only method by which some persons obtain information for a pedigree, it might be a good reason why many pedigrees are not traced or are false!

ii. The title page for a typescript copy of the parish registers of Llanglydwen, Caermarthenshire, indicates it is a copy of baptisms and burials from 1765 to 1900 and of marriages from 1755 to 1840. It does not state that portions of the baptism and burial registers were unreadable to the transcriber. The copy has been indexed, and if one should check the index for John Blethin (born in 1787) no mention of his name appears. This might indicate the search should be continued in the registers of nearby parishes. However, a check of the text of the typescript copy shows that much of the parish register prior to 1793 was lost or illegible. The Bishop's Transcripts for Llanglydwen contain the record of the entry being sought:

Chr. 30th September 1787 John the son of Thomas Blethin.

iii. Some indexes contain errors or omissions, and repeat incorrect transcriptions of names.

For instance, William Saunders Nailor was married in 1801, but the transcriber made an error, describing him as Williams *Saunders*, *nailor*, and indexing the entry under the surname of *Saunders* instead of under *Nailor*. Another example of incorrect indexing relates to Margaret, daughter of John Hassall and Dorothy Gardner, christened in 1819, and indexed incorrectly as Margaret *Hassall* instead of as Margaret Gardner, she being the daughter of John Hassall Gardner by his wife, Dorothy.

iv. In the indexes the surname may have a variety of spellings. If they are checked under only one spelling, the correct index reference may be overlooked.

As an example, if one were seeking the marriage record of Martin *Howarth* and turned to the index of the parish registers and looked for the spelling *Howarth*, it might contain a number of such entries but no reference to Martin *Howarth*. However, in the original entry of marriage, Martin *Howarth* was recorded as Martin *Haworth*, the index reference being listed under the spelling *Haworth*, which might appear on a different page. By missing the index reference, the searcher might fruitlessly search, perhaps at great expense, the marriage registers of other parishes, eventually giving up the project as a hopeless task.

v. When an index is available, it is a good plan to check it to find if any references are helpful. If the index does not show that which is being sought, it is a good plan to ignore it and search the text of the record for the period concerned. By a careful search of the register, any unusual rendering of the surname of the family which was not evident when checking the index, might be found. Here are a few examples:

Great Wymondley, Herts.	Bonfield, Bonefield, and Bonfill.
Coventry, Warwickshire	Meacock and Maycock; also Deakin, Daken, Daykin.
Swansea, Glamorgan	Peregrine and Perkins.
Cardiff, Glamorgan	Avery and Every.
Bristol, Gloucester	Wroe, Rowe, and Roe.
Pembrey, Carmarthen	Hennings and Hennys.

White Robert and
 Jane Ann
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PLATE I. Part of an Index to Marriages, 1821-1822, for St. Peter's, Liverpool, Lancashire.

of the Parish of St. Peter's, Liverpool, Lancashire.

and

were married in this

by

with Consent of

this

Day of

in the Year One thousand eight hundred and

By me

This Marriage was solemnized between

in the Presence of

No. 157

PLATE II. Entry of marriage, 1821, St. Peter's Church, Liverpool.

In seeking the marriage of Elizabeth Dawber, said to be married in Liverpool in 1822, it would be simple to search the index to marriages at St. Peter's, Liverpool, and find no reference to the marriage entry. If one were careless, he might not note that it was an index to males only, and thus assume that the marriage entry was not in the registers of St. Peter's, Liverpool. By searching the register, and ignoring the index, the following marriage is traceable:

Married 19 March 1822 John Ball, a mariner and
Elizabeth Dawber, spinster.

vii. Mis-interpretation of an entry may result in a wrong connection.

In seeking the birth or christening record for a Susanna Bennett born in London about 1786, searches were made in the copies of parish registers available in the library. The following entry was traced in the registers of the Parish of Saint Martin Orgar, City of London:

Chr. 19 April (1788) Susanna d. of John Bennett and Dinah Morris, (born Mar. 22).

This was accepted as the likely entry for Susanna Bennett. However, the correct interpretation of the christening entry would be Susanna, daughter of John Bennett Morris and Dinah, his wife, unless some other evidence was found to discount such interpretation.

viii. Some parish register copies are not verbatim copies, but list all entries in an abbreviated form.

For example, the printed marriage register for the parish of Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, lists the following entries:

11 July 1782 Edward Marshall married Ann Simes
6 May 1788 Thomas Humphrey married Sarah Webster.

The original parish register of Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, shows more information, which is quoted below, except that the witnesses and signatures of the persons have been omitted from the quotes:

11 July 1782 Edward Marshall of Mansfield, framework
knitter, aged 26 years, a bachelor, and
Ann Simes of Mansfield, aged 40 years, a
spinster.

6 May 1788 Thomas Humphrey of Mansfield, aged 51 years, a bachelor, and
Sarah Webster of Mansfield, aged 34 years,
a spinster.

If the copy of the parish register does not give the full entry of marriage as recorded in the original parish register, it is wise to obtain a certified copy of the entry.³³ As another example, note the information taken from the printed marriage register for the parish of Lanlivery, Cornwall:

11 June 1774 William Udy, y., & Isabella Varcoe, *lic*.

The original parish register for Lanlivery, Cornwall shows:

(No 84) June 11th, 1774 WILLIAM UDY, Yeoman of this parish and
ISABELLA VARCOE, *Widow* of this parish were married by licence.
They signed William Udy, Isabella Varcoe.
Witnesses signed Walter Hill, Joseph Lukey.

Prior to obtaining the certified copy of the entry of marriage, various attempts had been made to trace the christening of an Isabella Varcoe, but without success. She was actually given the name of Isabella Pearse, under which name she had married George Varco, of Lanlivery, on the 21 September 1769, at Lanivet, Cornwall.

ix. Microfilm copies of parish registers, whether a copy of the original register or of a transcript, cannot be handled exactly the same as the record or book that has been photographed. First of all a book can be opened and closed at any particular place, turned upside down, checked quickly for a possible "Table of Contents," "Preface," or index, but this is not so with a microfilm copy. One sees only a page or two at a time, as projected upon the screen of the microfilm reading machine. Before making an intensive search, it is wise to make a quick check of the entire record on the roll of microfilm, and thus obtain an idea of how extensive the register may be, and whether the baptisms, marriages, and burials are recorded together or separately. Such a pre-

33. See Chapter 10, "The Parish Registers" for details on the amount of information given in marriage registers. Not all marriage entries in parish registers give as detailed information as shown in the example taken from Mansfield.

check will show whether an index is included, or if the material is in logical sequence and easy to read.

Ideally, microfilm copies are an exact copy of the complete register book, but in reality, they are an exact copy only of the pages that were filmed. Much depends upon the photographer as to the completeness of the filming and the quality of the reproductions. For example, a certain marriage register was microfilmed. Later, when a search was made of this microfilm, it was discovered that an error had been made, resulting in the omission of all marriages from 16 April 1832 to 4 May 1834, and from 11 August 1835 to 30 June 1837, involving the records of over one hundred marriages. If one searched such a copy without checking on the continuity of the record, one might assume that a certain marriage was not recorded in the parish searched, although it was recorded in the original registers. This assumption might lead to endless expense in searching other parishes for the marriage record.

x. It is important to watch for continuity. As the search of one page is completed, *watch carefully that the next page follows in numerical or logical sequence. A mere search for the entries of a particular surname is not sufficient.* It is folly to take for granted that the record is complete, even if it is an accurate microfilm. Sometimes a part of the original register has been lost, and so there will be a corresponding gap in the copy. Any gaps in any copy of a register might be filled in by a check of the original records, or the Bishop's Transcripts.

xi. It is often necessary to extract all entries of the family surnames being sought, as it is usually impossible to make a correct analysis without them. In addition, one should extract entries of all families of the ancestral surnames, so that he may, by careful analysis and the use of additional records, eventually prove to be a second, third, or even a fourth cousin to a family that formerly appeared to have no relationship. Information found should be carefully listed.³⁴ The full entry must be copied, including all names, dates, occupations, residences, and other data of a genealogical value. Omit only such information as the signatures of the officiating ministers and other excess details. The page numbers

34. A chapter, "Planning Methodical Research, Recording Data," is planned for a later volume.

and the entry numbers, where given, are often a help if a recheck is needed later. If an entire section of a record, or certain entries in a record are illegible, or the writing is difficult to decipher, careful notes should be made of the dates and pages involved. Further action may be required to determine whether the illegible material is pertinent to the problem.

Abbreviations should be used consistently but with caution; they are quite permissible and timesaving if used with prudence. A researcher used Jno. for both John and Jonathan for persons of both names living in the same parish at the same time. Geo. has also been used for both George and Geoffrey.

It should be noted whether the entry is a christening, marriage, or burial, as it will be impossible to come to any satisfactory conclusion if there is any doubt as to what was meant.

As an example, the value of complete entries is evident from a list of baptisms copied from the registers of Manchester, Lancashire. The first time the information was extracted, the residences and occupations were omitted, but on a recheck, they were added, as shown in *italics*:

*Manchester Collegiate Church (now The Cathedral), Lancashire.
Baptisms 1824-1836.*

18 Oct.	1824	Charles s. of James & Mary Green, of Manchester, Engraver
4 Mar.	1826	George s. of James & Mary Green, of Manchester, Velvet dresser
21 Oct.	1827	Harriet d. of James & Mary Green, of Salford, Engraver
6 Apr.	1828	James s. of James & Mary Green, of Manchester, Sawyer
31 Aug.	1828	Elizabeth d. of James & Mary Green, of Manchester, Glass blower
31 July	1831	Margaret d. of James & Mary Green, of Salford, Engraver
14 Apr.	1833	Elizabeth d. of James & Mary Green, of Salford, Engraver
16 Oct.	1836	John s. of James & Mary Green, of Manchester, Weaver

Without the address and occupation of the father, it is impossible, from the parish register entries alone, to decide how many families are represented in the above list of baptisms. Not all baptismal registers give as detailed information, but the complete entry must be copied.

xii. There are many problems associated with the tracing of a christening entry. Earlier in this chapter, the problem created by seeking for the christening of an Isabella Varcoe, not realizing that Varcoe was her husband's surname is cited. In a later chapter³⁵ information is given concerning

35. See Chapter 14, "Marriage Licences and the Intention to Marry."

an original record of marriage that did not show any information concerning the marital status of the bride, who was, in fact, a widow. It is usual to base the year and place of birth or christening upon some known facts, among which may be:

- a. Age given in a census record that may also state a birth-place.
- b. Age given in a death or a burial entry.
- c. Age given in a marriage or other document.³⁶
- d. Family records stating birthdate and place.
- e. Approximation based on the number of children in the family group.
- f. Details gleaned from probate and other records mentioning the individual or family concerned.³⁷

There is no set rule as to how far one should search in a parish register for the christening. Some parents have their children christened immediately after birth, while others wait several years. In some instances families may live somewhat remote from the parish minister, or may have leanings towards Nonconformity, in which case the christenings by a Church of England clergyman may be delayed or never consummated.

Note these extracts from parish registers:

Aberystroth or Blaina, Monmouthshire.

Chr 23 Nov.) John (aged 10 years); Anne (aged 8 years);
1820) Susannah (aged 6 years); William (aged 4
years) and Miles (aged 2 years) children of
William and Susannah Evans of Pencrug,
a farmer.

In searching the Aberystroth registers from 1807 to 1818 for John Evans, born about 1810, no mention is found of him, as he was not recorded until the year 1820 when he was christened.

Horsley, Gloucestershire.

Chr 12 Nov 1773 Jane, *the wife* of Thomas Sansum, aged 22
years.

This is an unusual entry, because it is a christening record for a married woman and not an infant. On the 9

36. In later volumes there will appear discussions on such records as apprenticeship, freedom, navy, army, quarter sessions, which often give ages and residences.

37. Probate Records will be discussed in a later volume.

July 1770, Thomas Sansom a cordwainer, married Jane Horwood, a spinster. Both signed the register in the presence of witnesses Richard Horwood and Wilm. Clift. She was buried 21 September 1775, and described as Jane *uxor* Thomas Sansome. There is also in the baptismal register a christening dated 27 April 1795 for Hester Horwood aged 41 years. In the marriage registers, under date of 23 May 1741, appears an entry for Richard Horwood and Hester Tekel. It is very possible that the christening in 1773 for Mrs. Jane Sansum, and the christening in 1795 for Hester Horwood, relate to the christenings of two of the children of Richard Horwood who married in 1741. In some parts of the country there were families who were married in the Church of England that did not have their children christened in that church. Later the children, as adults, were christened by a Church of England clergyman.

If the ancestor died before the 1851 census was taken, and the christening record has not yet been found, a careful examination of the entries from the parish registers, family records, etc., might disclose the record of a brother or a sister who was living when the 1851 census was taken, and whose birthplace, as recorded therein, may be the parish to search for the ancestry. In cases where the christening entry is not traced in the town or parish indicated by the census or other clues, other searches might include:

- a. In several of the nearby parishes, in case the child was christened by the clergyman of a parish adjoining that in which the child was born. Occasionally children are carried to some distant parish to be christened, because of some previous attachment — sentimental, traditional, or otherwise — of the parents.
- b. The child was not christened by a Church of England clergyman, but might have been by a Nonconformist preacher and registered in a Nonparochial register.

When the census or other reasonably-correct records have indicated that the ancestor was born in a certain place, and the christening record has not been found there, then a few nearby parishes should be searched. The problem has then to be reconsidered if the christening entry can not be traced: either the census or other record was wrong or the family might have been Nonconformists.³⁸ There is no limit

38. See also Chapter 15, "The Nonconformists." Consideration should also be given as to whether a family belonged to the Catholic Church or the Jewish race.

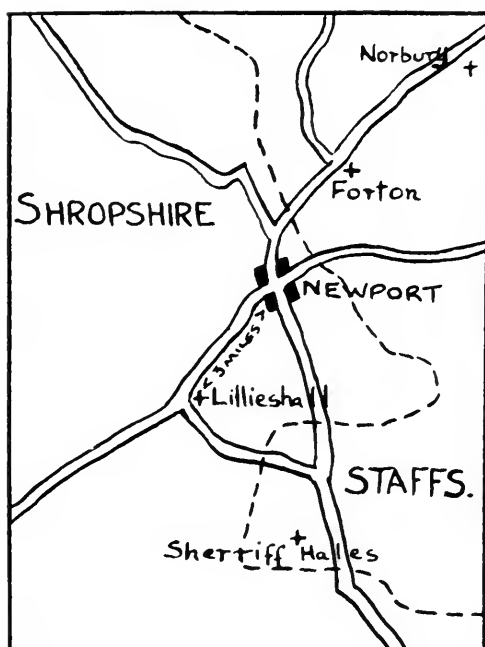


Fig. 1. The market town (Newport) could well be the place where young people from villages miles distant would first meet as they brought their farm produce to be marketed.
 represents the county boundary.

to the number of adjacent parishes that might be searched assuming there is no indication that the family came from some distant place.³⁹ Some families are to be found recorded in the registers of one small locality for generations, while other families, because of their movements, are extremely difficult to trace.

In choosing parishes to search, consideration should be given to the position of lakes, rivers, roads, and mountains of the locality,⁴⁰ and to the occupations or social status of the family. A young man, visiting the market town on business or pleasure might meet his future wife there, although they come from villages many miles apart. (See Fig. 1) A young woman may be employed many miles away from home as a servant, or may be visiting friends or relatives, and there meet

39. The trace of an entry in an adjoining parish is no evidence that it relates to the connection desired. Proof should be sought before accepting it. This is especially necessary when the surname involved is a common one.

40. A chapter on "Topography, Geography, and Maps" is planned for a later volume.

her future husband, also employed many miles from his home. After their marriage they might settle in an entirely different place. Newly married women sometimes visit their parents' parish for the birth and christening of their first child.

With the opening of mines, factories, and other commercial pursuits, agricultural workers left the fields and flocked to the towns; young children were apprenticed miles away from their birthplaces. Those who imagine that travel was very restricted two hundred years ago should carefully consider this example:

Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, Baptisms in 1778.

Benjamin Marshall son of James Marshall of Mansfield, framework-knitter, son of Sylvester Marshall of Mansfield, framework-knitter, by Elizabeth (his wife) daughter of James Truelove of Sheffield (Yorkshire) whitesmith; and Margaret daughter of Richard Chapman of Blackwell (Derbyshire) farmer, by Theodosia (his wife) daughter of William Rhodes of Teversal (Derbyshire), farmer, born 6 Feb chr 13 Feb 1778.

Tracing the pedigree of a family where such complete information is not given would be extremely difficult. Unfortunately, parish registers rarely record such complete information but the above example serves to illustrate the distances which people traveled. (See Fig. 2)

xiii. Marriage records are often found in the parish where the children were born and christened, but not all couples married in that same parish. When planning to search for the record of a marriage, it is wise to study several practical questions:

- a. What period of years is involved?
- b. What proof exists that the child shown in the family group as the eldest is the first born child?
- c. Was the first child born soon after the marriage, or several years later, or before the marriage took place?
- d. Is anything known as to the birthplaces of the couple whose marriage is being sought? Are their approximate birthdates determinable?
- e. Does the history of the locality indicate that there was a parish church in the locality that was very popular for marriages?
- f. Are there any special marriage indexes available?

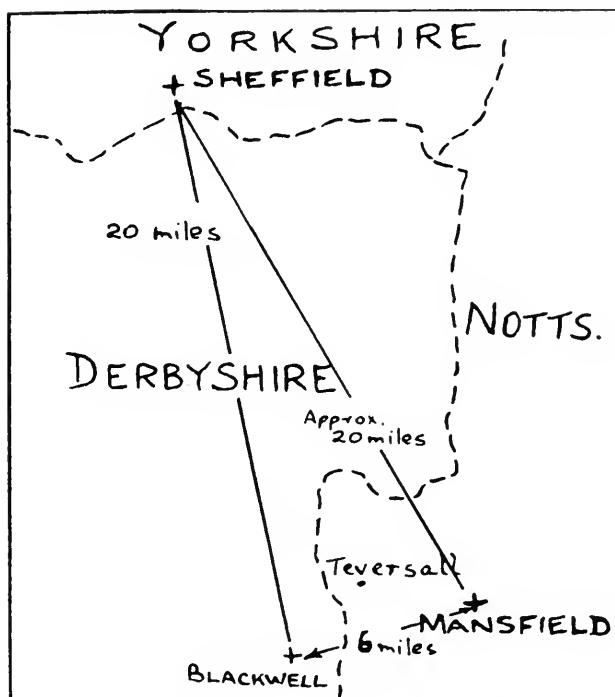


Fig. 2. Showing the four places (in three counties) mentioned in the baptism quoted from Mansfield parish registers.

If the parish or parishes of usual residence do not give the marriage record, then the registers of the nearby parishes should be searched, not only for the marriage record but also for possible additional children.

All that was known about the ancestry of Edward Cassity, the town crier of Aberdare, Glamorganshire, born in 1807, was that his father, Thomas Cassity, was said to be born in France, and his mother, Catherine Penale, was born in *Gwinup*, Cornwall, the daughter of Mr. Penale by Catherine, his wife. There is no such place as *Gwinup*, but there is a Gwennap, Cornwall. A search of the registers of Gwennap failed to trace the Penale family. A search was then made in the partial marriage index for Cornwall, compiled by Percival Boyd.⁴¹ This showed:

1770 Penhall Thomas and Kath. Raby married at Kenwyn
 1796 Penhale Kath and Thomas Cassedy married at Kenwyn.

41. A complete listing of the counties partially indexed by Percival Boyd will appear in a later volume.

A search of the parish registers of Kenwyn disclosed that the first marriage took place 26 May 1770. This was followed by an entry in the christenings dated 26 September 1773, for Catherine, daughter of Thomas and Catherine Penhale. Kenwyn is about seven miles from Gwennap and this example illustrates one way of using such a marriage index to good advantage where a surname which is not too common is involved.

The family's trade may have some bearing upon where to seek for the marriage record. If a man was employed as a potter in Doncaster, Yorkshire, but was not married in that parish, it may be that he was born in the important industrial area known as "The Potteries," in Staffordshire. If he married in Staffordshire and then immediately went to Doncaster in Yorkshire, a search in the parishes surrounding Doncaster would not disclose the marriage record. There are cases where the marriage took place after the birth of the first child, even though the christening record may imply that the child was legitimate. When no likely marriage entry is located by a search of an earlier period, it is important to search for a year or two after the birth year of the first child. If this is not done, unprofitable searches might be made in the marriage registers of other parishes.

Inscriptions taken from tombstones, ages given in census, burial and death records, or other documents, may determine the approximate year of birth of an ancestor. If a particular parish register shows that a married couple had children registered from 1704 onwards, but their ages indicate that both of them were born in 1674, it is likely that they were married sometime after their 16th birthday, or between 1690 and 1704.⁴² The records known as marriage licences, bonds and allegations, and the registers of the publications of the banns are of real value in tracing places where ancestors and their families were married; these are discussed in a later chapter.⁴³

xiv. The value of burial records cannot be over-stressed. There are some people who imagine that searching them is a

42. It must not be construed that persons under the age of 16 years did not marry, as some did marry before they were 16, but these early marriages are proportionately rare.

43. See also Chapter 14, "Marriage Licences and the Intention to Marry."

waste of time! They could not be more mistaken. Burial entries can furnish decisive proof in determining ancestral connections. It is true that many entries show little or no identification of the deceased. However, by listing all burial entries of the family, they may be studied for clues, taking into consideration, among other questions, the following:

- a. Are the ages at death recorded, either occasionally or throughout the register?
- b. Is it possible to distinguish between the burials of children and adults?
- c. Are titles, occupations, relationships, and places of residence (place names) recorded?
- d. Do the place names relate to places outside the parish?
- e. Is the number of burials out of proportion to the number of christenings and marriages, and if so, is the proportion smaller or greater?

An age at death will help appromixate a birth year. For instance, a person died in 1800 aged 60 years. The parish registers disclose that his first child was born in 1762. This man probably would have married in 1761, whereas if his age at death had been 75, there would be some reason to search for his marriage over a greater length of time. There might have been children born, and recorded in some other parish register, prior to the first child found in 1762.

For example, a search was once made in the parish registers of Llanidloes, Montgomeryshire, for the christening of Owen Owen, and among other entries there was listed "chr 20 April 1776 Owen son of Ellis and Elizabeth Owen." This was accepted as the connection. Later a search of the burials showed *buried* on 12 June 1793 was "Owen son of Elis Owen and Elizabeth his wife." Apparently the Owen Owen born in 1776 died when he was 17 years of age. It is often difficult to make a decision as to how far one should search in the burials for a possible entry relating to a child whose record of christening seems to have all the appearances of an ancestral connection.

As another example, the Lockwood family of Crowle, Lincolnshire, is of interest. Michael and Elizabeth Lockwood were parents of children born between 1700 and 1714, including Sarah Lockwood, christened 25 March 1709. The burials show that on 4 April 1729 Sarah the daughter of Michael and Elizabeth Lockwood was buried. An unwary searcher failing to search a wide period in the burial registers might accept the christening of 1709 as relating to a Sarah Lockwood married about 1730 in another nearby parish.

Information has already been given concerning cities, towns, and parishes that have more than one burial ground.⁴⁴ If the number of burials seem too few for the number of persons residing in the parish, it might be an indication that burials took place in another graveyard. In order to secure the ages at death of Eli Blackham and Mary, his wife, searches were made in the Church of England burial registers of Dudley, Worcestershire, and the adjoining parish of Tipton, Staffordshire, but without success. A search was made later in the burial records of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Dudley, which resulted in finding the entries of Eli Blackham buried in May 1839 aged 65 and Mary Blackham buried in November 1839 aged 65.

There were families who died at their usual residences in one parish, but were buried in another parish. The reason for this might be they owned a family grave lot or the deceased may have left express instructions to be buried elsewhere. Naturally, the records of these burials are found in the registers of the places where the interments were made, and not in the parishes where the deaths occurred. If William Holt died about 1813 in the parish of Saint Peter, Liverpool, but was buried in the churchyard at Saint John's, Liverpool, the only parish register entry of his death would be in the burial registers of Saint John's parish. John How was known to have died in Cowbridge, Glamorganshire, before 1837, but the record of his death was not found in the Cowbridge burial registers. The registers of Coity, Glamorganshire, were searched, and the record was found there showing that John How, aged 75 years, of *Cowbridge*, was buried in Nolton Churchyard, Coity Parish, on 4 February 1835. The families of a particular locality might

44. See Chapter 3, "Cemeteries, Burial Grounds, and Churchyards."

be recorded in the registers of the ancient parish church, or in a more recently formed parish, in the burial books of a Nonconformist chapel, or of a cemetery kept by a local government body or a private company. The presence of additional burial grounds is often difficult to detect.

Finally, it is somewhat surprising to find that there are persons who do not write out a synopsis of the main objects of the search, and who do not clearly state in their notebooks what records they have searched.⁴⁵ If there is any doubt as to what has been searched, the search should be made again.

45. A discussion on "Planning Methodical Research" will appear in a later volume.

Chapter Thirteen

BISHOP'S TRANSCRIPTS AND THEIR VALUE

ENGLAND and Wales are the only two countries that have a contemporary copy of the parish registers. These are generally known as Bishop's Transcripts (B. T's), and in some localities they are known as Archdeacon's Transcripts (A. T's) and occasionally referred to as "register bills." For our purposes we shall call them all Bishop's Transcripts. The clergy of the Church of England were ordered to keep parish registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials as early as 1538, but many of them disregarded the order. The government, supported by the archbishops, issued an injunction in 1597 enforcing the regular keeping of parchment parish register books. At the same time, the clergymen were ordered to make an annual copy of their registers. This usually consisted of copying all entries from Lady-Day (25th March) of one year to Lady-Day of the following year.

The copies were usually made of parchment pages, of varying sizes, from a small piece of a few inches square to large sheets big enough to cover the top of a large desk.

There are in existence in certain localities, Bishop's Transcripts of earlier dates than 1598. Examples of these earlier records are to be found in the counties of Leicester, Lincoln, Kent, Surrey, and probably others. Whatever the reason for these earlier dates, some going back to as early as 1558, they have proved a boon to genealogists because the original registers in some of the parishes have perished. The Bishop's Transcripts have also suffered by the ravages of time through damp, neglect, and fire. For example, the transcripts for the County of Dorset were destroyed by fire in 1731, and it is said that the transcripts for Pembrokeshire were used in book-binding, so that very few remain for that county prior to 1799. Nevertheless, a vast amount of information which would not otherwise be available, can be obtained from those remaining.

Usually these annual copies were returns made to the Bishop of the Diocese, hence the name Bishop's Transcripts.

In a few instances they were retained in the registry of the archdeacon, hence the occasional name Archdeacon's Transcripts. The Diocese of Canterbury (Kent) has two sets of transcripts for many of its parishes. When the record of a year is missing from one set, it might be traced in the other. In the same county there are thirty-three parishes that were "Peculiar of the Archbishop of Canterbury," but for which there are no Bishop's Transcripts. Within most dioceses there are one or more parishes that are called "Peculiar." For a variety of reasons "Peculiar" were exempt from many of the orders applying to a normal parish, so that many of the clergymen in charge of such "Peculiar" did not send annual returns (or Bishop's Transcripts) to the diocesan registry. However, some "Peculiar" did return transcripts to the diocesan registry.

No one seems to know which came first, the entry as written in the parish register or the record now known as the Bishop's Transcript. In some parishes a daybook or other form of notebook was used to record the ceremonies, and in others, loose pieces of paper were used. Later, at a time convenient to the clergyman or his clerk, the entries were written into the parish registers. This was sometimes monthly, quarterly, or annually. The uniform way in which some parish registers are written, suggests that the record was made at intervals. Here and there may be seen insertions made as if by afterthought, or the discovery of an omission. Occasionally, a given name is missing from an entry or the date is incomplete and spaces are left, indicating that such detail was not known at the time the event was written into the register. This is an indication that the entry was made sometime after the actual event. Some parishes still retain the old notebooks or daybooks, such as those said to be in the vestry at Ripon Cathedral, Yorkshire. It has been placed on record that a parish minister in Derbyshire was walking along the canal bank and picked up a piece of paper. This contained notes made by his parish clerk of ceremonies the minister had recently performed. He took the paper home and recorded the entries in the registers stating how he had found the information. One wonders in how many less fortunate cases loose papers have been irretrievably lost. Where the parish register was written after a lapse of time, perhaps annually, it is possible

that the transcript (or copy for the Bishop) was made at the same time. There are cases on record where the Bishop's Transcripts list some entries not recorded in the parish registers. One may surmise that the transcript was made, not from the parish register but from some day-by-day account. The differences between the register and the transcript may have occurred at the time the register was copied from the day book, and the transcript was also copied up at the same time with variations occurring in the copying of the details. Researchers should be aware of these possibilities. The ideal method of research is to search both the registers and the transcripts if such is feasible and not too expensive.

The present condition of existing Bishop's Transcripts varies widely, document by document as well as collection by collection. Instances have even been noted where the larger parchments have been used as wrappers for a bundle of other parchments. The vast accumulation of documents in some registries created a storage problem, and the records were bundled into some out-of-the-way place and consequently neglected. Prior to the present century little use was made of Bishop's Transcripts except perhaps to support evidence in a legal dispute. Following the introduction in 1813 of parish register books with printed forms, the making of copies (Bishop's Transcripts) was not rigidly enforced. When Civil Registration commenced in 1837, many parish ministers ceased to send in copies. In spite of this, many Bishop's Transcripts are found down to the 1870's and later, so no general statement can be made as to a date when these records ceased to be made.

The following examples show differences existing between parish registers and Bishop's Transcripts and also day-to-day books.

1. *Cartmel, Lancashire*.¹

a. The parish register records 5 August 1769 that Richard Maychell of Wraysholme was buried.

The day-to-day book reveals that this person was a "Lunatic, poisoned by eating nightshade berries."

b. The parish register records that on 11 July 1769 John Hadwen, Lindale, was buried.

The day-to-day book reveals that he was "aged 24 years, drowned bathing near Holme."

1. Based on an article by Dr. R. Dickinson, "The Value of Bishop's Transcripts and Some Notes on Parish Registers," *The Genealogists' Magazine*, XI, London: The Society of Genealogists, 1952, pp. 211-213.

A true and correct copy of the Register of Burials
 Parish of St. Andrew in the County of Montgomery
 of the Parish for the year 1810 by the Rev. John
 Bishop.

BURIALS.

John & Elizabeth Infant was buried Jan 4
 Jane Morris — was buried March — 17
 Robert Davis — was buried May — 15
 Catherine Hill — was buried June — 9
 John Gabriel — was buried July — 1
 Catherine Evans — was buried July — 27
 William Davies — was buried July — 27

BAPTISMS.

John & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Jan 4 — 17
 John & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Jan 25 — 20
 David & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Feb 7 — 15
 David & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Feb 13 — 15
 David & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop March 7 — 15
 Mary & David (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop April 25 — 29
 John & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop May 10 — 15
 David & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop May 20 — 27
 John & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Nov 7 — 11
 John & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Dec 8 — 9

DECEASED.

John & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Jan 4 — 17
 John & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Jan 25 — 20
 David & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Feb 7 — 15
 David & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Feb 13 — 15
 David & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop March 7 — 15
 Mary & David (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop April 25 — 29
 John & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop May 10 — 15
 David & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop May 20 — 27
 John & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Nov 7 — 11
 John & Elizabeth (Infants) by Rev. John Bishop Dec 8 — 9

A True List of all Marriages, Baptisms, and Burials in the Parish of Kibworth in the County of Montgomery, taken from the Register Books of the said Parish, from July the 2^d 1811 to July the 22^d 1812 both days inclusive.

Marriages 1811.

John Davies of the Parish of Stannington Rutland and Jane Jones of this Parish, Spinster, were married in this Church by Banns September the 24th.

David Edwards of the Parish of Lennant Rutland and Sarah Hughes of this Parish Spinster were married in this Church by Banns November the 22^d.

Marriages 1812.

Edward Thomas of this Parish Rutland and Anne Jones of this Parish Spinster were married in this Church by Banns Feb^y 14th.

Edward Hughes of this Parish Rutland and Elizabeth Thomas of this Parish Spinster were married in this Church by Banns Feb^y 26th.

Baptisms for 1811

Ernest the son of John Davies and Jane his wife of Kibworth was baptized the 25th of October.

Baptisms for 1812.

John the son of Robert Jones and Jane his wife of the Parish of Kibworth was baptized the 10th of January.
Edward the son of John Williams and Jane his wife of Kibworth was baptized the 10th of January.

PLATE II. Bishop's Transcript commencing 2nd July 1811.

In the examples cited, perhaps the copyist believed that the information omitted from the parish register was unimportant.

2. Portslade, Sussex

a. The parish register shows that on 9 May 1764 John Truseler of Winchelsea parish, a bachelor was married to Mary Sarjant of Portslade parish, after banns.

b. The Bishop's Transcript records that both persons were "of Portslade."

3. Crowhurst, Sussex

a. The parish register records 15 April 1706, buried, Dionis son of Thomas Geer, late deceased.

b. The Bishop's Transcripts records, buried Dionis, son of Widow Geer.

Any years or parts of a yearly transcript that are missing should be noted, for, without particulars, one cannot truly

evaluate the results of a search.² Care should be taken to note whether the Bishop's Transcripts are consistent as to dates. For instance, a few months in a year may be missing because the copyist who made the Bishop's Transcript was inconsistent. Examples are: (See PLATE I and PLATE II)

- i. *Hirnant, Montgomeryshire (St. Asaph Diocese)*. The transcript for January to December 1795 is followed by a transcript for May 1796 to May 1797. The transcript ending December 1810 is followed by the transcript commencing 2 July 1811. In both cases a great portion of the year went unrecorded in the Bishop's Transcripts. Some clergymen used the various events of the year as dates to conclude their transcripts, such as 31 December; Easter (a different date each year), or the Visitation of the archdeacon or bishop (which dates vary).
- ii. *Llanfair Talhaiarn, Denbighshire, (St. Asaph Diocese)*. The transcript for 1796 was found to be filed between the transcripts for the years 1821 and 1822. Some of the pages for baptisms and burials for 1852 were found filed with the year 1832.
- iii. With the introduction in 1754 of the new form of marriage entries, clergymen usually entered the christenings and burials in one register and the marriages in a separate register. When the Bishop's Transcripts were made, some clergymen copied the christenings (baptisms) and burials for the year, but omitted to record the marriages. In some small parishes there may have been a year without any marriages, but some clergymen noted in the Bishop's Transcript that such was the case. A note should be made when no marriages appear, and in parishes with a larger population it may mean that the entries were omitted by the minister. In such cases, the parish registers must be searched. (See PLATE III.)

The Bishop's Transcripts usually consist of loose parchment sheets made by annually copying the entries of one year from the parish registers. As some of these sheets have been lost, misplaced, torn, or have become illegible, it is important that an accurate record be made of the actual years searched, together with a list of those years that are lost or are illegible, either in whole or in part. It is good practice to have a previously prepared list of years to be searched, and as a search is made of a particular year, to place a check mark beside that year on the prepared list. Sometimes a transcript may be out of place, and when

2. A chapter on "Planning Methodical Research" will appear in a later volume.

A True Copy of the Register Book of the Parish of Loveston in the County of Pembrokeshire from the first of January 1804 to the first of January 1805.

Baptisms None.

Burials

Mary Thomas Daughter of Thomas Thomas was buried March 11th 1804
Anne Williams was buried March 24th 1804.

Marriages None

Stephen Myland the 17th of April 1805.

1805 1806
1807 1808
1809 1810

A True Copy of the Register Books of the Parish of Loveston in the County of Pembrokeshire from Easter 1805 to Easter 1806.

Baptisms

William son of John Pritchard was baptized June 27th 1805
Thomas son of David Thomas was baptized July 27th 1805
Benjamin son of Thomas Edwards was baptized Oct. 27th 1805
John son of Thomas Lewis was baptized Nov. 23rd 1805

Communion 4 1805 to last July 22nd 1806

Communion 9 1806 to last March 1st 1807

Marriages None

April 1806

Benjamin Twining Rector
of Loveston

PLATE III. Bishop's Transcripts of Loveston, Pembrokeshire. Note that one ends 1 January 1805 and the next commences Easter 1805. The Rector comments in both transcripts that there were no marriages in both periods.

searching it might be found. Then this system can be very effective. Here is an example of such a list:

Bishop's Transcripts of Trefriw, Caernarvonshire.

1700	1704	1708✓	1712✓	1716✓	1720✓	1724✓	1728
1701	1705✓	1709✓	1713✓	1717	1721✓	1725	
1702	1706✓	1710✓	1714✓	1718✓	1722✓	1726✓	
1703	1707✓	1711	1715✓	1719✓	1723✓	1727	

If, like those for Hirnant, Montgomeryshire, the Bishop's Transcripts are not consistent as to dates, it is also helpful that a list similar to the above be made containing additional notes as to the inconsistencies. For example, one might list the Bishop's Transcripts as:

1795 Jan to Decr	1801 Jan to Decr (no marriages entered)
1796 May to May 1797	1802 Jan to Decr (no marriages took place)
1797 May to May 1798	1803 Easter to Easter 1804
1798 Jan to Decr	1804 Jan to Decr (no marrs. entered)
1799 (Missing)	1805 Jan to Decr (Decr. torn & dirty)
1800 Jan to Decr	1806 (missing)
(January to June torn, illegi- ble.)	

It is clear that, should an important event such as a marriage have taken place between January and April 1796 in this parish, record of the entry would not be in the Bishop's Transcripts for 1795 to 1796. It would have to be searched for in the parish registers. One cannot evaluate the results of a search in the Bishop's Transcripts unless such a listing has been made during the search. From the listing one may determine the years to be searched in the parish registers so as to fill-in the details missing in the Bishop's Transcripts.

When making searches in Bishop's Transcripts, the probable differences that might occur in the same entries in the parish registers should be kept in mind. Here are a few examples to illustrate differences that occur between the two types of records:

Parish registers of Truro, Cornwall.

9 June 1756 Richard Surgent, mariner, and Mary Williams, widow, married by licence. Witnesses, William Startridge, Edw. Terrill.

Bishop's Transcripts of Truro, Cornwall.

9 June 1756 Richard Surgent and Mary Williams married by licence.

Parish Registers of Dalston, Cumberland.

25 Sept. 1769 Henry Graham, widower and Jane Bulman, spinster, married by banns.

22 Sept. 1770 Christopher Simpson, bachelor, and Jane Stalker, singlewoman, married by licence.

Bishop's Transcripts of Dalston, Cumberland.

25 Sept. 1769 Henry Graham and Jane Bulman married.

22 Sept. 1770 Christopher Simpson and Jane Stalker married.

These examples show that in some cases the Bishop's Transcripts have been "edited" or abbreviated and that it is wise to find out what facts the parish registers contain, providing that they are not lost, especially if the entry is pertinent to the pedigree.

If the registers of the parish are not available, or important details are lost from them through damage and other causes, there may be Bishop's Transcripts available. If these records have been copied and are available in libraries, they will usually appear catalogued under the name of the parish concerned.

Examples:

Somersetshire: Babcary. Bishop's Transcripts at Wells for 1598, 1606, 1607, 1608-9, 1617, 1629, 1637-8, 1638, 1663, 1667, 1669, 1751, 1752, 1800-1812.

As the parish registers of Babcary commence in 1704 for christenings, and in 1726 for marriages and burials, it is evident that the Bishop's Transcripts cover some dates earlier than the existing parish registers.

Cornwall County: Cuby. Bishop's Transcripts of Cuby (parish) in the Truro Diocese from about 1678 to 1773, kept at Bodmin, Cornwall.

This catalogue entry does not indicate what years are actually available in this copy of the Cuby Bishop's Transcripts. It would be necessary to examine the records of 1678 to 1773 to determine the extent of them. As the County of Cornwall was formerly wholly contained in the Diocese of Exeter, there may be additional Bishop's Transcripts, not included in the above copy, kept at the Diocesan Registry

3. E. Dwelly, F.S.G., (ed.) *Dwelly's Parish Records*, (1913-1922) an excellent series of printed books relating to Bishop's Transcripts kept at the Diocesan Offices, Wells, Somersetshire.

at Exeter.⁴ There are no parish registers for Cuby prior to 1813.⁵

Carmarthenshire, Wales: Pembrey. Bishop's Transcripts 1670-1867. An examination of the records will determine what years are actually extant. The parish registers commence in 1700.

Denbighshire, North Wales: Abergele. The Bishop's Transcripts (for Abergele Parish), St. Asaph Diocese, to 1850.

This catalogue entry does not show what years are contained in the copy, but an examination of the copy shows that it contains Bishop's Transcripts for 1783, 1784, 1797, 1798-1804, 1806-1812, 1813-1842, 1844, 1845, 1848-1851 for christenings and burials with marriages down to 1837 only. It will be noted that many gaps occur in the record. The parish registers commence in 1647.

Cumberland County: Aikton. The Bishop's Transcripts of Aikton in Carlisle Diocese, about 1665-1865.

The parish registers commence in 1694, so the Bishop's Transcripts are useful in extending research back to 1665.

When there are no copies of Bishop's Transcripts in libraries, it is necessary to trace the present places of deposit of the original records. In order to do that, it is necessary to trace the name of the archdeaconry and diocese in which the parish was situated at the period of time in question. For example, Ufton Nervet, Berkshire, is now in the diocese of Oxford, but if the Bishop's Transcripts for 1750 to 1812 were required, it would be necessary to consult reference books in order to determine if Ufton Nervet was in the diocese of Oxford at that period. Lewis's *A Topographical Dictionary of England*⁶ states that Ufton is a parish in the Archdeaconry of Berks. and Diocese of Salisbury. The logical place for the deposit of the Bishop's Transcripts for Ufton Nervet would therefore be in the Diocesan Registry, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

4. A chapter, discussing the Counties of England and the various ecclesiastical (particularly Diocesan) divisions, is planned for a later volume.

5. The two parishes, Cuby and Tregoney, have one register. The christenings, marriages, and burials have always been entered in a common register at Saint James, Tregoney.

6. Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (1831 and 1833 editions only) and *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales* (1833 edition only) *op. cit.*

While it is usual to find the Bishop's Transcripts at the diocesan offices, many of these records are being cared for by the county authorities. If, for instance, one checked *A Topographical Dictionary of England* for Huyton, Lancashire, and for Kirkham, Lancashire, the first-named place would be described as being in the Archdeaconry and Diocese of Chester and the second as being in the Archdeaconry of Richmond and Diocese of Chester. The original Bishop's Transcripts for Huyton were formerly kept at the Diocesan Registry, Chester, Cheshire, and those for Kirkham at the Diocesan Registry at Lancaster, Lancashire, but in recent years all the Lancashire Bishop's Transcripts have been transferred from both Registries to the Lancashire Record Office at the County Hall, Preston, Lancashire.⁷

7. A chapter regarding the disposition of the original Bishop's Transcripts for each county in England and Wales is planned for a later volume.

Chapter Fourteen

MARRIAGE LICENCES AND THE INTENTION TO MARRY

A marriage licence is not to be confused with an entry in a marriage register or with the certified copy of any such entry or, as such a copy is sometimes called, *the marriage lines*. Many American readers may think that this is a chapter about marriage entries in parish registers. This chapter discusses certain documents relating to the intention to marry and not to the records made after the marriage ceremony had been performed.

For many centuries it has been an English custom to inform the officials concerned of "intention to marry." There were some Nonconformists, Roman Catholics, and Jews who solemnized marriages. These and other clandestine marriages avoided the legal formalities, and they are outside the scope of this chapter.

Prior to 1 July 1837 (when Civil Registration¹ of marriages came into force) the Established Church of England was the sole body concerned with the legal recording of marriages, except for a brief period from 1653 to 1660 during the Commonwealth. Any person intending marriage was required to see that certain formalities were completed before the marriage could be solemnized. There were two procedures, either of which had to be followed before a marriage could take place. The less expensive method was to be married after the publication of the banns. The other method was to obtain a marriage licence.

Publication of the Banns. If both persons resided in the same parish, details of their intention to marry was given to the parish clerk or clergyman. If they lived in different parishes, then the clergymen of both parishes were informed. If either or both of the persons were under age, the consent of their legal guardians was necessary. For three succeeding Sundays the *Banns* was published. (See PLATE I)

1. See Chapter 4, "Civil Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages."

(The Year 1754)

Page 1

N^o 1

Banns of Marriage between John Green of the Parish of Hemel Hempstead in the County of Hertford and his Widow and Elizabeth Goulding of the Parish of Hemel Hempstead were published on the three Sundays underwritten:

That is to say, On Sunday, the 21st day of April 1754 by me J. P. Green Minister

On Sunday, the 28th of April 1754 by me J. P. Green Minister

On Sunday, the 5th of May 1754 - Same by me J. P. Green Minister

N^o 2

Banns of Marriage between William Green of the Parish of Hemel Hempstead in the County of Hertford and his Widow and Elizabeth Goulding of the Parish of Hemel Hempstead were published on the three Sundays underwritten:

That is to say, On Sunday, the 7th day of May 1754 by me J. P. Green Minister

On Sunday, the 14th day of May 1754 by me J. P. Green Minister

On Sunday, the 21st day of May 1754 by me J. P. Green Minister

N^o 3

Banns of Marriage between William Green of the Parish of Hemel Hempstead in the County of Hertford and his Widow and Elizabeth Goulding of the Parish of Hemel Hempstead were published on the three Sundays underwritten:

That is to say, On Sunday, the 30th of May 1754 by me J. P. Green Minister

On Sunday, the 6th of June 1754 by me J. P. Green Minister

On Sunday, the 13th of June 1754 by me J. P. Green Minister

This was usually done by the clergyman announcing from the pulpit the names of the persons intending to marry. During the three weeks waiting period, any person was at liberty to come forward and state any reason why the marriage should not take place. Impediments in the way of a marriage might be that one or both of the persons were under age and did not have the consent of parents or guardians; that they were married and still had spouses living; or that they were within the prohibited degrees of affinity (or relationship). Such marriages could then be prevented. The action of any one who came forward to prevent the marriage was known as "*forbidding the banns.*"

This procedure permitted both public notice and also the elapse of three to four weeks. If there was no "*forbidding the banns,*" the marriage was solemnized at any convenient time after the third Sunday. If both persons resided in the same parish, there was no additional formality. If they resided in different parishes, a certificate was transmitted from one parish to the other indicating that there were no impediments.

A parish church in either parish could be selected for the ceremony, and it is likely that in many ceremonies the place chosen was that which was convenient for the bride. In some ancient parishes there were parochial chapelries where marriages took place. It would seem that persons residing in any part of the parish could be married in the ancient church or in any of the several parochial chapels in that parish. This may account for the marriage of a couple, both of whom were residents of Rainford, a chapelry in the Parish of Prescott, Lancashire, being celebrated in the Farnworth Chapel in the same parish. Many residents in the large parish of Prestwich-cum-Oldham, Lancashire, are to be found recorded in the marriage registers of the parochial chapel of Middleton in that parish.

There is reason to believe that prior to April 1754, many clergymen were lax in their methods, and often married persons from distant places who had no residential qualifications and were seemingly married without any publications of banns. The new marriage act which came into force on Lady-Day (25 March) 1754, insisted upon the residential qualifications and also the proper recording of the publications of banns. Many parishes are still in possession of these

old Banns Books, which contain the details of the names of the persons who intended to marry.²

It must be noted that the *publications of the banns* is no proof that a marriage ever took place, for even if no legal impediments occurred, marriage plans could still be cancelled by the persons themselves.

These records are of great value to genealogists. Occasionally they give information not in the marriage register. When residents of the parish had the banns published, but married elsewhere, the banns book may indicate the name of the parish of residence of the other persons, thus giving a clue as to which parishes to search for the entries of the marriages. It is unlikely that there are any banns books containing the publications of the banns dating prior to April 1754. Some parishes have good sets of banns records since that date, while others have practically none. Since 1 July 1837, the persons intending marriage do not have to be married within the Church of England, in which case they may inform the officials at the local civil register office to publish the banns, by exhibiting the details of the intended marriage on the special notice board at the register office. If the banns thus published are not forbidden, then the parties concerned may marry in the register office or in a church, chapel, or licensed building which meets the requirements of the marriage laws.

Here are some examples of the publications of banns, taken from the records of the Parish of Wetheral in County Cumberland. (See also PLATE II)

Banns Book Commencing October 1800, the date quoted is the third Sunday:

3 Sept. 1809 Jonathan Walton, bachelor (of Wetheral)
Margaret Heslope, spinster of Abbey Lannercost.
[No marriage of this couple entered in Wetheral Marriage Registers.]³

Marriage Register of Wetheral.

15 Jan. 1764 George Harrison, bachelor (of Wetheral)
Elizabeth Briggs, spinster (of Wetheral)

Banns Book of Wetheral records additional facts not in marriage entry above:

2. See Chapter 10, "The Parish Registers."

3. Married 10 September 1809 (Lannercost, Cumberland, parish registers).

Banns of Marriage between

N^o 9 James Hardman of the Parish of Bury Sanholder and
Widower and Mary Nicholls of the
 Parish of Bury Sanholder were
 Married in this Church by Licence.
 this Twenty sixth Day of May in the Year One Thousand Seven
 Hundred and fifty four by me John Winder, Curate
 This Marriage was solemnized between Us { James Hardman
Mary Nicholls her & Mark
 In the Presence of George Semard
John Leigh

Banns of Marriage between

Robert Potburyell and Jane Heaps were published on the
14th & on the 26th Days of May & on the 2^d Day of June 1754 by me John Winder Curate

N^o 10 the said Robert Potburyell of the Parish of Bury Weaver
 and Jane Heaps of the
 Parish of Bury were
 Married in this Church by Banns
 this eight Day of June in the Year One Thousand Seven
 Hundred and fifty four by me John Winder Curate
 This Marriage was solemnized between Us { Robert Potburyell his & Mark
Jane Heaps her & Mark
 In the Presence of Thomas Semard
Richard Adkinsell

Banns of Marriage between

David Whippard of the Parish of Bury & Elizabeth Townsend of the
 Parish of Worcester were published on the 12th & on the 17th & on the 20th Days of May 1754 by me John Winder Curate

N^o _____ of Parish _____
 and _____ of _____
 Parish _____ were
 Married in this _____ by _____
 this _____ Day of _____ in the Year One Thousand Seven
 Hundred and _____ by me _____
 This Marriage was solemnized between Us { _____
 In the Presence of _____

PLATE II. Marriage Register entries demonstrating marriage by Licence; marriage after banns publication; and a banns publication without a subsequent marriage in this parish. (Taken from Bury Parish Registers.)

Jan. 1764 George Harrison, bachelor and son of John Harrison of Gt. Corby
Elizabeth Briggs, spinster of Great Corby.
[Great Corby is a village within the parish of Wetheral.]

It is unusual for parents to be named in the Banns Book, but sometimes when minors (those under legal age) have banns published, the names of the person or persons giving consent are recorded. Occasionally, additional facts, such as village or township of residence within the parish are given. Entries of marriage are known to exist where the marital status of the persons is not given, but in the Banns Book entry this information might appear. This is of great importance, especially if the woman concerned is marked "widow" in the banns publication, but not in the marriage entry.

Marriage Licences, Bonds and Allegations—A licence to marry was always needed when the banns was not published. A marriage licence avoided the publicity of the announcements from the pulpit of the parish church (or churches) concerned, as well as the waiting period of three successive Sundays. Some people wished to marry quietly, and there were, of course, many reasons for such privacy. Among these many reasons was that of sailors whose ships were scheduled to sail. Marriages by licence were not confined to any particular social class, although it is possible that the middle and upper class families may have used the method more frequently because the officials charged fees that may have excluded the poorer people.

Licences were issued by the authority of the following officials:

- i. The Archbishop of Canterbury.
- ii. The Archbishop of York.
- iii. The bishop of a diocese.
- iv. The archdeacon of an archdeaconry within a diocese.
- v. Certain clergymen whose parishes had peculiar jurisdiction.

When none of the persons considering marriage was resident within the diocese where the intended marriage was to take place, then a *Special Licence* had to be obtained, and so licences to marry in any parish in England and Wales were issued by the Faculty Office in London under the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Licences were issued by the Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Canter-

bury to marry in any parish within the Province of Canterbury. The Vicar-General's office was also in London. Similarly a licence from the Archbishop of York permitted a marriage within that province.

If one of the persons was a resident of the diocese and the marriage was to take place in a parish within that diocese, then the licence was obtainable from the Chancellor at the registry of the bishop or archdeacon. A Chancellor is the legal representative appointed to act for the bishop or archdeacon. When it was difficult for the persons to travel to that registry, a licence could be obtained from a clergyman or official known as a *surrogate*. He was appointed by the bishop, and several of them resided in various parts of the diocese. Some clergymen of parishes known as *peculiars* issued licences to marry in parishes within their jurisdiction.

The granting of licences was governed by law, although diocesan authorities employed various methods of recording the details. There are three documents connected with marriage by licence. Rarely are all three still in existence. Sometimes only two, and often only one of them is traceable. In many cases none of the documents have survived, but some dioceses have part of the details entered into *act books*.

(i) *The Marriage Allegation*—When a couple wished to marry without the publication of banns, one of them had to visit the registry or office of one of the officials already mentioned and make an allegation or sworn statement ensuring that the canon law (of the Church of England) had been complied with and that there were no known lawful impediments to the marriage. If one or both persons were minors (under 21 years of age), written consent of the parents or guardians had to be furnished at the time of the allegation. Occasionally it was not possible for either person to attend, so a friend or relative appeared. He made the allegation and a sworn statement; he was also bonded in a sum of money that the statement was true. In 1823, the use of the marriage allegation was abolished.

(ii) *The Marriage Bond*—Usually the prospective bridegroom, accompanied by a friend or relative, appeared personally, and they were jointly bonded in sworn statements that there were no lawful impediments to the marriage. The obligations of the bondsmen were a precaution that the

statements were genuine. Because a large sum of money was mentioned in the bond, it is probable that the intention was to secure reliable bondsmen. In the Introduction to *Lancaster Marriage Bonds*,⁴ it is pointed out that usually the "obligation" mentioned in the bond is in Latin and the "condition" stated in the bond is in English. The names of the persons to be married, as well as the bondsmen, appear together with the name of the church (or choice of churches) where the marriage ceremony was to be performed. The following quotation taken from the above publication, is of interest:

There are normally two bondsmen, the first being the bridegroom . . . In many cases his is the only *bona fide* bond, the other name being fictitious (such as) John Doe, Richard Roe, or the like, the humorous surrogate or other official sometimes adding 'esq' or 'gent' to these names and even providing them with a signature.

There are bonds where the bridegroom is not a bondsman, but where two other persons have their names entered. The name of the bridegroom will appear with that of the bride in that part of the bond known as the "condition" shown in the example quoted on pages 215 and 216.

(iii) *The Marriage Licence*—When all the legal conditions had been fulfilled to the satisfaction of the official, a marriage licence was issued to the applicant, which he was to deliver to the clergyman who was to perform the ceremony. The clergyman probably retained the document, some of which are occasionally found among the papers kept at the parish church. Some licences may have been returned to the diocesan registry, for now and again one may find such a licence attached to the original allegation or bond. For instance, there is a large collection of such licences relating to Southwark, Surrey, in the Minet Library, Camberwell, London.

The clergyman who performed the ceremony, by authority of a licence, then duly entered the details of the marriage in the parish register, usually (but not always) recording that the ceremony was performed "by licence." The important thing to remember is that, although some say they are searching parish registers for a *marriage li-*

4. Publications of the Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Volume 74, see "Introduction."

cence they are actually searching for a *marriage entry or record*, whereas those who are searching for documentary evidence that a marriage licence was issued are looking for a *marriage licence bond*, or *allegation*, or the record of such in an *act book* kept by the diocese.

If, after a marriage licence was issued by a surrogate or by a clergyman of a parish with peculiar jurisdiction, and they failed to send returns of the information to the diocesan registry, then the records of such allegations or bonds are probably lost.

Records known variously as *marriage licences*, *bonds*, and *allegations* must be cautiously used. They are not evidence that a marriage took place, but merely prove that there was an intention to marry and that a marriage licence was issued. Any subsequent "change of mind" by the persons mentioned in the documents did not alter the documents already made.

When a marriage allegation gives the name of the parish or parishes in which the marriage may be solemnized and a search of the registers of such places fails to trace the marriage, it may be that the persons went to some other parish church or parochial chapelry for the ceremony. It is also possible that there was a "change of mind," and the marriage never took place.

There were clergymen who solemnized marriages without the *calling* (that is, the publication) of the banns, or by virtue of a marriage licence. They also performed marriages without the persons having any qualifications as to legal residence. Such clandestine marriages were stopped by the Marriage Act which came into force in 1754.

Whenever listing entries of marriages from parish registers, it is wise to include reference as to whether a marriage took place by licence. This is easily done by adding "lic" after the date of the entry, similar to the example from Over Kellett parish quoted on page 215. Prior to 1754 the marriage registers do not always record whether or not the ceremony was by licence. In 1713-1714 it was proposed that entries in parish registers should be marked as to whether the marriage was "after banns" or by a "licence." However, if the entry is not thus marked, it does not mean that the marriage may not have been performed by licence.

The following is an entry of marriage taken from the parish register of Over Kellett, a chapelry in the parish of Bolton-le-Sands, Lancashire:

28 July (John Lucas, a taylor)
 1751 (and) both of Over
 by lic. (Margaret Threlfall, a spinster) Kellett.

One may well ask concerning the ages of the above persons. A guess might be made that they were aged between 21 years and 30 years, but after all it would only be a guess. Checking the excellent reference book, Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of England*⁵ shows that Over Kellett is in the Archdeaconry of Richmond. The records of original marriage bonds and allegations for the Lancashire Deaneries of the Archdeaconry of Richmond were formerly kept at Lancaster but they are now at the Lancashire Record Office, Preston. These records have been printed down to 1745.⁶ The original documents have been microfilmed down to 1799 and a copy of the microfilm is available in the Library of the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City.

This is a partial quotation from the original marriage bond and allegation which preceded the issue of a licence for the above John Lucas to be married at Over Kellett, Lancashire: (See Plate I and Plate II.)

The Bond.

Know all men by these presents that we }
 John Lucas of Over Kellett in the parish of Bolton by the
 Sands Taylor and Richard Poole of Lancaster taylor, both
 in the County of Lancaster are held and firmly bound unto
 the Right Reverend Father in God, Samuel by Divine Per-
 mission, Lord Bishop of Chester in Two Hundred Pounds
 of good and lawful Money of Great Britain, . . . dated the
 twenty-seventh day of July 1751.

The Condition of this Obligation is such, that if there shall
 not hereafter appear any lawful Let or Impediment . . . that
 the above bounden John Lucas and Margaret Threlfall of
 Over Kellett aforesaid, spinster, both in the Archdeaconry

5. *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (1831 and 1833 editions only) Samuel Lewis, *op. cit.*

6. *Lancaster Marriage Bonds* (Publications of the Record Society of Lancashire & Cheshire.).

the twenty seventh — Day of July — in the Year of our Lord
 one thousand seven hundred and fifty — The within named

aged thirty nine Years — and upwards appeared Personally and
 alledged that he intended to Marry with Margaret Moffatt
 within named aged twenty two — years, and that he knoweth of no
 lawful Let or Impediment by reason of any Precontract, Consanguin-
 ity, Affinity or any other lawful Cause whatsoever to binder the said
 intended Marriage, of the Truth of which he made Oath

John Lucas

Sworn before Me

Richard Dickinson. Surrogate

of Richmond may lawfully marry together, . . . in . . . (the)
Parish Church or Chapel of *Over Kellet* aforesaid.

Sealed and Delivered

in the Presence of

Chas Lambert

Notary Publick

John Lucas

Richard Poole

The Allegation.

On the *twenty-seventh day of July 1751* . . . The within
named *John Lucas* aged *thirty-nine* years and upwards, ap-
peared Personally and alledged that he intended to Marry
with *Margaret Threllfall* within named, aged *twenty-two*
years, and that he knoweth of no lawful Let or Impediment.
Sworn before me

Richd Atkinson, Surrogate.

John Lucas.

The Ages Given. The main value of this particular Mar-
riage Allegation is that the ages of both persons are given.
In this case, the age of the groom is seventeen years in ad-
vance of that of the bride, and therefore in searching for his
birth (or christening) record, he would be found almost a
generation earlier than his bride. These ages should always
be used with caution. In many instances they are found to
be incorrect. The phrase "aged thirty-nine years and up-
wards" varies in meaning. A common expression in these
records is "aged twenty-one years and upwards." Usually,
this merely refers to the fact that the person alleges that he
or she was of "full and legal age" and might be aged 21
years, or any age above. Thus, if the age is given as "thirty-
nine years and upwards," the person has passed the thirty-
ninth birthday and may be thirty-nine years and a few
months. In some instances it could refer to any age above
the number of years stated, except that ages of minors will
always be under twenty-one years.

When an allegation was made by the prospective bride-
groom, the allegation of the age of the bride may be what he
believed to be correct, but then he might have been taking
her word for it! It is always wise to seek the burials of those
who married and see if an age given in that record, or per-
haps on a tombstone record, agrees with the alleged age at
the time of the marriage.

If any of the persons were under the full legal age (under
21 years) then the consent of the parents or guardians was
required. The following is taken from the records of the dio-

cese of Llandaff, now at the National Library of Wales, and a microfilm copy is at the Library of the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City:

1804. A marriage bond made by John Rodon and John Astin both of Merthyr Tydfil, Glam. They signed: John Rodon and John Astin. In the marriage allegation they are described as John Rodon and John Austin, Junr., and they signed John Rodoen and John Astin. Attached to the bond is the following statement:

I Samuel Astin Grant that
My Daughter Ann Astin
Shall be Joined in Wedlock
with the Said John Rodon.
Signed the mark x of Saml. Astin.
22 Oct 1804
Merthyr
Witness John Astin.

In the Bishop's Transcripts relating to the parish of Merthyr Tydfil, the marriage is recorded "24 October 1804 John Roden and Ann Astons, both of this parish, by Licence" without any comment as to being married with the consent of her father. Note, too, the variety of spellings used.

In the records of the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, formerly belonging to the Diocese of Saint David's, but now deposited at the National Library of Wales, is the following record:

On the *thirteenth* Day of March 1790 Appeared Personally *Thomas Kinsey* of the Parish of *Llyswen* in the County of Brecon *Blacksmith* and alledged and made oath that he is a *bachelor* of the age of *Twenty-One years and upwards* and intends to Marry *Elizabeth Michael* of the Parish of *Llanigan* in the Said County of Brecon, a *spinster* and a *minor of the Age of Twenty years with the Consent of Thomas Michael her father.* (signatures)

Thos Kinsey
Thomas Michael

Even though the persons may be of full legal age, a marriage bond and allegation may supply helpful information. In the microfilm copy of the records of the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon (formerly Diocese of St. David's) appears this marriage allegation:

13th 10ber 1746

John Jones of Llangattock, Brecon, Gent. age 24 and Ditvill Williams of same, spinster, age 27 . . . that the parents of

the said John Jones are consenting thereto and that the parents of the said Ditvill Williams are dead.

The prospective bride is several years older than the groom. No reason is given as to why mention was made of the consent of the parents (in plural) of John Jones, or why the bride's parents are stated "dead."

The following is an instance of where the man is a minor but the woman is of full age, taken from the records of the Diocese of Llandaff:

11 Jan 1758

Charles Morgan of Penlline, Glamorgan, bachelor and minor and Mary Howell of Lantrissant, Glamorgan, spinster, aged twenty-one years and upwards.

Appeared personally Charles Morgan of Penlline, and made oath that he is the natural and lawful father of the said Charles Morgan and that he is consenting to the above mentioned marriage.

Some dioceses have marriage bonds only; some have only the marriage allegations, and others have *Act Books* in which are entered details of marriage licences issued. Some have parts of all three records covering various periods. For instance, in the Diocese of Bristol the bonds date from 1637, but the allegations do not begin until 1729. In the Diocese of Gloucester the allegations commence in 1637 but the bonds do not begin until 1729. In the records of the Archdeacons of Chester the *Marriage Licence Act Books* commence in 1606, but there are no marriage licence bonds until 1661. In the "Preface" to volume 73 of the publications of the Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire *Marriage Licences Granted 1680-1691* is the statement:

In certain cases the Marriage Licence Act Books for the period covered by this volume only gives names (and sometimes only surnames) of the recipients of the licences. Owing to difficulties arising out of the war it has not been possible to amplify such bare entries by reference to the bundles of marriage licence bonds.

Then in the "Preface" to volume 77, covering 1691-1700 appears:

These Act Books are often very imperfect records for the period they cover, and no search should be considered complete without reference to the original marriage bonds which are filed in yearly bundles at the Diocesan Registry.

Differences as regards names between original marriage bonds and corresponding *Act Books* are of interest:

ACT BOOK	ORIGINAL BOND
April 1 1700 Timothy Gardiner	Timothy Garner
May 20 1700 George Shone	John Shone
Aug 23 1700 John Key, yeoman	John Keyes

This means that even though the records of certain dioceses may appear in print, it may be a good thing to read the "Introductions" and "Prefaces" to such publications, and, if it is thought that there may be original bonds or allegations which have not been compared in every case with the *act books* and other sources, a check might be made of these original documents if they exist. When searching those in print, if no ages or allegations are given, then it is likely that only the bonds or *act books* have been consulted.

In seeking the marriage of Martin Hardman of Silkstone to his wife, Elizabeth, a check of the excellent marriage index to certain Yorkshire marriages by Percival Boyd would fail to disclose it. Consideration would naturally be taken of the printed copy of abstracts from marriage licence documents formerly kept at York, known as *Paver's Marriage Licences at York*.⁷ Here is the extract taken from the *printed copy*:

1636 Martin Hardman, clerk of Silkstone to marry Elizabeth Fodell, spinster, of St. Martin Micklegate, York.

Turning now to the printed copy of the parish registers of St. Martin-cum-Gregory, City of York:

Mr. Hurdman Clarke of the one partie and Elyzabeth ffudell of this parsh sarvant to Mr. Thomas Bowser married 24th day of november (1636).

The above marriage is repeated in Mr. Boyd's marriage index under *Clarke*.

Obviously some error has been made. Presumably the clerk who made the entry in the original parish register has confused the issue as to whether Mr. Hardman, a clerk, was Mr. Hurdman Clarke, unless the printed register is a wrong transcription.

In the parish registers of St. Paul's Walden, Hertfordshire, appears:

7. *Pavers Marriage Licences* (Publications of the Yorks. Archaeological Society, Record Series), 1908. Vol. 40.

19 Feb 1795 George Swainston to Ann Thrussell by lic.

As no indication was given as to the marital condition of *Ann Thrussell*, an over-anxious researcher found a christening for an *Ann Thrussell* in the nearby town of Luton, Bedfordshire, and traced a pedigree from that entry. A more cautious approach was made to the same problem, and a copy was obtained of the marriage bond and allegation. St. Paul's Walden, according to the *Lewis's Topographical Dictionary* (1833 Edition) was in the Archdeaconry of Saint Albans and Diocese of London. The marriage bonds and allegations for the Archdeaconry are at the Hertfordshire County Records Office, Hertford, and the document shows:

George Swainston aged 21 years and a bachelor
Ann Thrussell aged 30 years and a widow, both of St. Paul's Walden.

Thus the maiden surname of Ann was not *Thrussell*, and failure to check the marriage allegation led to the construction of a false pedigree.

The following example is taken from the printed series of records of marriage licences issued in the Archdeaconry of Chichester in Sussex.⁸

2 April 1711 John Standridge of Boxgrove, bachelor and
Sarah Quinell of Sidlesham, maiden.
Sureties — Christopher Harris of Chichester,
bricklayer
Samuel Plummer of the same, victualler.

As no ages are given, but the names of bondsmen are listed, apparently no allegations were preserved. After 1754, in the Archdeaconry of Chichester, the surrogates obtained allegations (also known as *affidavits*) which add to the information on the persons concerned. Note the following from *Calendar of Sussex Marriage Licences. . . Archdeaconry of Chichester 1731-1774*:⁹

1755 Sept 30 William Burrell of Pulborough (11 months)
husbandman, b., aged 24, and Sarah Chalk-
rirt of the same, at West Ham (one year),
spr., aged 20 (consent, her f. George C.);

8. *Calendar of Sussex Marriage Licences (Archdeaconry of Chichester) 1575-1730*, (London: Sussex Record Society, 1909) Vol. 9, Page 187.

9. *Ibid.*, Volume 32.

Further interpretation of the two examples quoted will be found by reading the "Introductions" and "Abbreviations" given in the above publications.

ss. the sd. W.B. and Thomas Backshell of the same, farmer (Pulborough) (a.b.)

1755 July 28 John Parlett of Arundell (from his birth), glover and felmonger, b., aged 27, and Ann Taylor of the same (from her birth), m., aged 32; ss. the sd. J.P. and John Smart of Chichester, glover (Arundell.)

Note how valuable this particular set of records is. William Burrell had resided only eleven months in Pulborough. John Parlett had resided in his birthplace, Arundell, all the time prior to his application for a marriage licence.

As previously mentioned a *special licence* had to be obtained if the marriage was to take place in some parish outside the jurisdiction of the bishops, archdeacons or peculiars of the diocese in which the persons concerned resided. This *special licence* could only be granted by the officials appointed by an archbishop. Therefore, consideration must be given to the licences granted by the Faculty Office of the Archbishop of Canterbury; the Registry of the Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Canterbury (both offices being in London); and the Registry of the Archbishop of York at York.

It appears that many persons who married within the boundaries of the diocese in which they resided, also obtained licences from the officials appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. Provided the officials were satisfied that sufficient reasons and securities were given, a licence to marry was granted upon the payment of the fees demanded.

Excellent work has been accomplished in printing abstracts from the records of the Faculty Office and the Vicar-General's Office. The publications of the Harleian Society and of the British Record Society (*The Index Library series*) are of real value. One should always read the "Introductions" and "Prefaces" for guidance as to what actually has been put into print. The publication, *London Marriage Licences 1521-1869*¹⁰ contains a veritable mine of information, but the title of the book is misleading to the unwary. This book's material must not be accepted as a complete record of all marriage licences issued from the various courts in London. The "Introduction" states, "I extracted the most

10. Joseph Foster, (ed.) *London Marriage Licences* (London: 1887).

important of them." What the compiler considered *unimportant to him* may be the actual record one is seeking.

Here is an example taken from the above book, *London Marriage Licences*:—

Samuel Swann of Thedlethorp, Co. Lincoln, Gent., bachelor, age 23 and Katherine Sprignell, spinster age 22, daughter of Katherine Sprignell of Petworth, Sussex, who consents —At St. Clement Danes, Middlesex. 18 September 1662. Issued from the Faculty Office.

Thus a man from the County of Lincoln in the eastern part of England obtained a licence to marry a woman from the County of Sussex on the south coast, with the marriage to take place in St. Clement Danes (London), a locality quite some distance from the other two places.

In the publication, *Marriage Allegations in the Registry of the Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Canterbury 1660-1679*,¹¹ there appears on page 51:

The earliest volume now in existence commences 25 July 1660. I have taken all, except those persons evidently of the very humblest rank.

In searching this volume, perhaps the record of a marriage licence one is seeking may be among those rejected as being concerned with the "humblest rank." However, the later publications of The Harleian Society (volumes 33 and 34)¹² contain references to all those marriage allegations of the Vicar-General's Office omitted from volume 23.

The following is an example, taken from the parish registers of Kinlet, Shropshire, of how the marriage allegations of the Vicar-General's Office solved a problem:

Parish Registers of Kinlet, Salop

Chr	2 Oct	1680	Anne	daughter of Thomas Mountford and Eliz
Chr	6 Sep	1682	Lacon Thomas	son of Thomas Mountford and Eliz
Chr	7 Sep	1684	Will	son of Thomas Mountford and Eliz
Chr	11 Apr	1687	John	son of Thomas Mountford and Eliz
Chr	16 Mar	1688/9	Catherine	dau of Thomas Mountford and Eliz
		1690	Thomas Mountford	named as Churchwarden
Chr	3 Oct	1691	Sarah	dau of Thomas Mountford and Eliz

11. Harleian Society, *Allegations for Marriage Licences issued by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, 1558-1699*, also the *Vicar General of the Archbishop of Canterbury 1600-1679*, (London: Harleian Society, 1886) vol. 23.

12. *Ibid.*, Volumes 33 and 34 (1892). However, the details printed are abstracts from the Act Books only, being briefer than the actual documents.

Bur 3 Mar 1693/4	Sara	dau of Thomas Mountford
Bur 15 Dec 1696	Ann	dau of Thomas Mountford and Eliz
Bur 6 Apr 1706	William	son of Thomas Mountford
Bur 19 Oct 1709	Elizabeth	wife of Thomas Mountford
Bur 7 Nov 1719	Thomas Mountford	

The reference book, Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of England* (1833 edition), records that Kinlet is a parish in the Archdeaconry of Salop and the Diocese of Hereford, and the map shows this parish to be situated in the extreme south of the County of Salop (Shropshire) on the border of the County of Worcester. The excellent (but partial) *Shropshire Marriage Index*, by the late Percival Boyd, failed to show a marriage for Thomas Mountford to Elizabeth, his wife. In case of *phonetic error* a check was made not only of *Mountford*, but also *Mounford*, *Mumford*, *Munford*, and other possible spellings. There is no *Boyd's Marriage Index* for the nearby counties of Worcester or Stafford. If a marriage licence was obtained within the same diocese, the marriage licence records would be at the Hereford Diocesan Office. If one of the persons had a residence in the adjoining county of Worcester, and obtained a licence there, the record would be at the Worcester Diocesan Office. Or if one were a resident of the northern part of Shropshire, (which is mainly in the diocese of Lichfield), or in the adjoining county of Stafford (which is also in the diocese of Lichfield), the marriage licence might be at the Diocesan Office, Lichfield, Staffordshire. These are only a few of the possibilities. None of the diocesan records of marriage licences issued for Hereford, Worcester, or Lichfield have been *fully* published for the period around 1670-1680. If both of the persons desired to marry outside of the Diocese of Hereford, and not in a diocese of their particular residence, a marriage licence might have been obtained either from the Faculty Office or the Vicar-General's Office, both under the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury and both in London.

In 1892, The Harleian Society published volume 34 of its series, *Allegations for Marriage Licences Issued by the Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Canterbury 1669 to 1679*.¹³ On page 237 was found:

1679 May 12 Thomas Mountford of Kinlet, Co Salop, Yeoman, Bachr., abt. 30.
Elizabeth Faulkner, of the same, spr. about

13. *Ibid.*

30, at own disposal. (To be married) at St. Martin's in the Fields, County Middlesex.

This is the record of the issuance of a licence to marry. The couple from Shropshire, (*over 100 miles northwest of London*), went to London and were married there.

The records of the Archbishop of York are kept at the Diocesan Registry in the City of York. The following is taken from *The Northern Genealogist for 1886* (volume 2):

York Marriage Bonds. The marriage bonds in the Archbishop's Registry commence in 1660, the earlier ones being traditionally said to have been made away with by Mr. Paver . . . There is also in the Registry a portion of a marriage Act Book for about the year 1620. The following selections are chiefly of such names as are known to us to be of interest. The affidavits or allegations begin to be filed with the bonds in 1733.

Then appears a number of references to marriage licences issued by the Archbishop of York's Registry, but as the foregoing quotation points out, they are only a *few* selections out of the huge collection. Here is one that shows how a man from *Cheshire* (county) applied for a licence to marry a woman from County *Durham*, and the marriage was to take place in the County of *York*:

1735 Aug 28 John Arden of Stockport, Cheshire, Esqr,
bachelor age 26 and
Sarah Pepper of the Grainge, County Durham,
spinster age 21 (To be married at York
Cathedral, or Scarbro' or Old Malton).

In the *Victoria History of the County of Lancaster*¹⁴ appears information that Henry Hulton died childless in 1737, having entered in the several estates of his father. He died without issue, having a short time before his death married Eleanor Copley. His burial appears in the parish registers of Deane, Lancashire, "5 November 1737, Henery Hulton of Over Hilton, Esqr." What was the identity of his wife, and where were they married? Boyd's partial *Marriage Index for Lancashire* failed to trace the entry. The records of marriage licences issued in the Archdeaconry of Chester and in the Archdeaconry of Richmond failed to show any clues. The records of the Archbishop of York for marriage licences dis-

14. *The Victoria History of the County of Lancaster*, volume 5 p. 29, (London: 1911.)

closed the following, as quoted from *The Northern Genealogist*:

1735 27 Sept Henry Hulton of Hulton, Lancs., Esqr., bachelor, age 50, and Eleanor Copley of Thornhill, spinster, aged 18 years, with consent of her mother Ellen Copley of Thornhill (to be married at Thornhill.).

The printed parish register of Thornhill, Yorkshire, shows that the marriage took place there, but no mention is made in the entry as to ages, the names of the bride's mother, or that the marriage took place by licence:

29 September 1735 Henry Hulton of Hulton, Esq., in the Parish of Dean in ye Cou of Lancashire and Eleanor Copley of this town.

In this case the partial *Marriage Index of Yorkshire* by Percival Boyd also carries a reference to the marriage at Thornhill, but in many instances there is not an easy-to-use index available. When a marriage record is not traced in the usual locality of residence or in a nearby parish, the records of marriage licences issued may trace it.

The following is a summary of the sources to consider:

- i. Printed or other copied records of marriage licence bonds, allegations (affidavits) and *act books* (calendars).
- ii. The diocesan registries where the records may now be stored.
- iii. The county record offices where the records may have been deposited by the ecclesiastical officials.

When the parish register indicates that a marriage took place *by licence*, an effort should be made to trace the documents or other possible record made when the licence was issued. The following rules should be applied in trying to determine where to seek a marriage licence record:

- i. Check *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (editions of 1831 and 1833 only) (which reference book includes Monmouthshire), or *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales* (edition of 1833 only) for details as to the classification of a parish, whether it is a *peculiar*; in a certain *arch-deaconry* or other ecclesiastical division, diocese, and province.¹⁵
- ii. Where the *Topographical Dictionaries* are not available,

15. Samuel Lewis, published in London 1831 and 1833. *op. cit.*

publications on the history of a parish or a county may disclose the desired information.

When an entry in a parish register is marked "licence" and a search in the archdeaconry or diocesan records fails to trace the allegation, bond, or a reference in an *act book*, there may be several reasons:

- i. The marriage bond or allegation may have been lost, either in the registry or by the person who retained it after the licence had been issued. For instance, a surrogate may have issued the licence without returning the details to the diocesan registry.
- ii. The record may have been returned to the diocesan registry many years after the licence had been issued, in which case the allegation or bond may be filed in the wrong year and briefly listed in the *act book* some years after the date of issue.
- iii. If the parish concerned was a *peculiar*, the records may never have been placed in the diocesan registry, and may be difficult to trace.
- iv. It is possible that the marriage licence was issued by the officials of the Archbishop of Canterbury or Archbishop of York.

Valuable work has been performed by those untiring individuals who have made available in print the abstracts of the marriage bonds, allegations, and *act books*. These publications often cover only the earlier periods, and a vast amount of work is yet to be accomplished to copy the balance, at least down to 1823, when the former method of *allegations* was changed, or down to 1837 when the new form of registration of marriages came into use.

There is additional valuable information to be found in the publication, *Gloucestershire Marriage Allegations 1637 to 1680*, especially in the "Introduction,"¹⁶ by Brian Frith, and the special article "Notes of the History of Marriage Licences," by Patrick McGrath.¹⁷

16. "Introduction," *Gloucestershire Marriage Allegations*, Brian Frith, 1637-1680, (Records Section of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society: 1954.).

17. "Notes on the History of Marriage Licences," Patrick McGrath, *Ibid.*

Chapter Fifteen

THE NONCONFORMISTS, THEIR HISTORY AND RECORDS

AMONG the wide variety of sources from which genealogical information may be gleaned, are the records of the religious organizations collectively described as *Protestant Nonconformists*, *Nonconformists*, and occasionally as *Dissenters*. It is necessary to appreciate the importance, not only of the records but also of the great *social* and *political* changes affected by members of these religious societies and their predecessors. Therefore, a few notes are relevant on the struggles of these organizations and of our ancestors who brought them into existence.

Before there were any religious groups called *Nonconformists*, there had to be a protest and schism from the absolute power of the *Roman Catholic Church*. This absolute power was due, not only to the physical force that the church was able to command, but also to the centuries-long control of ideas and thinking.

John Wyclif became the leader of a strong reform movement in England. He was born in Yorkshire about 1324, and studied philosophy, theology, and law at Oxford University. He studied the Scriptures and saw a great contrast between what the Church was in his day and what it had been in New Testament times. He had the *Latin Vulgate* translated into English; he assailed the organization of the Church, its doctrines, practices, and other activities not authorized by the Bible. He was the *first English reformer* to deny the dogmas and break with the traditions of the past and affirm the freedom of religious thought. He died in 1384, and his followers, the *Lollards*, were suppressed by force.

His work bore fruit in such men as John Huss of Bohemia, who stood for the rights of individual conscience. He was burned at the stake in 1415. Then began the *Renaissance* or *New Learning*, in which the hold on men's minds of dogmatic spiritual authority was loosened and made them less obedient to the Church and Pope.

Martin Luther was born in 1483. He became one of the great benefactors of mankind, having, at the risk of his own life, fought for the rights of the individual. Out of the *Protestant* movement came liberty of conscience and political freedom. Luther's contemporaries were Zwingli in Switzerland and Erasmus throughout Europe, but their opinions differed on many doctrines. After Zwingli was killed in 1531, John Calvin (1509-1565) continued the reform. The Reformers, Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin, differed from the Roman Church and from each other.

In theory, Luther's church government was to be by the congregation, but later he concluded that authority was needed, and in practice he placed the princes at the head of the church in the respective territories they controlled.

Calvin taught that the highest officer in the church was the elder. His teachings gave rise to the name *Presbyterian Church* in English-speaking countries, meaning the church of the *presbyters* or the *elders'* church.

The Church of England maintained the supremacy of the bishops as the highest authority in the church and direct successors of the apostles, but subordinated them to the King and Parliament. Outside England, the Church of England is called *Anglican* or *Episcopalian*. This name is indicative of their belief that the *Episcopus* (bishop) is the highest officer. All the reformers attacked the authority of the Pope and in its place substituted their own interpretation of the scriptures. In theory they believed in religious liberty, but in practice they believed in it only for themselves and their followers. All others were persecuted by the state at the command of the leaders in control of the church of the particular time. Today all Protestants denounce the use of force to procure religious conformity. The reformers made the scriptures available for everyone, asserted the right to individual interpretation thereof, and eventually led the way to religious tolerance.

The decisive beginning of the Reformation in England may be taken from the Act of Supremacy in 1534 when King Henry VIII appointed himself ". . . the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England. . . ." Every clergyman derived from the King his right to exercise spiritual

1. *A Short History of the English People*, J. R. Green, London: 1895.

powers. The changes in religion were by royal decree, and the sermons from the pulpits were the echoes of the royal will. At the beginning of his reign, Henry VIII had promised an English Bible, but it was not until 1538 that the edition by Miles Coverdale was published. The introduction of the Bible into the churches gave a new opening for the demands of the Protestants, and the young men and women alike read and expounded the scriptures. The Reformation in England was social and political, and the religion adopted by the monarchy determined the religion of the country. Between 1534 and 1563 Articles of Religion were adopted and later repealed. The English *Book of Common Prayer* was introduced in 1548/9.

A return was made to Catholicism under Queen Mary in 1555. Shortly after the succession of Queen Elizabeth I, a compromise church, largely Protestant in dogma but with an organization and liturgy patterned after that of Rome, was accepted in 1563 by the majority of the clergy and the people. Of those who openly refused, a few were persecuted, but many were undisturbed. Various groups existed, referred to as dissenters or nonconformists, as they dissented with the church established by law and would not conform to its demands in spiritual matters and public worship.

The Puritans were so called because of their wish to *purify* the existing church, to make it more Protestant and to exclude Romish forms in favor of a more simple ritual. Early in their history, they had no objection to *Episcopacy*, that is, the rule of the church by bishops. During the first years of the reign of Elizabeth I, the Bible was open for all to read and discuss, and the Queen's aim was moderation and political calm. Thomas Cartwright, whose studies at Geneva, Switzerland, had filled him with fanatical Calvinistic Presbyterianism, preached against the rule of the Church of England bishops, and wanted to substitute in its place the absolute rule of *presbyters* (or elders), and without any toleration of other beliefs.

The pressure of the Pope of Rome urging European rulers to make war on England, together with the pressures from within, caused Elizabeth I in 1593 to bestow powers on the Ecclesiastical Commission to proceed against heresy, schisms, and nonconformity. Persecution drew the Puritan clergy and the Presbyterians closer together. Another group,

the *Separatists*, who were also known as *Brownists*, were enthusiastically in favor of the rejection of a state church. They grew in membership to more than twenty thousand and organized their own churches. These, and other illegal assemblies for religious worship were known as *Conventicles*. Following persecution they left England for Holland and ultimately America. Among them were those who became the Pilgrim Fathers of the *Mayflower* in 1620. They were the forerunners of the *Independents* or, as they are now known, the *Congregationalists*.

Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin believed that the Christian Church had had a continuous existence from the time of the apostles. Most of the early reformers did not dare reject infant baptism, for to do so would be to admit that the Christian Church, as a divine church, had ceased to exist after infant baptism had become general in the Roman Catholic Church.

Nevertheless there arose in Switzerland about 1525 a radical movement, some members of which believed there had been an apostacy; they were called *Anabaptists*. Because the Bible made no mention of infant baptism, they denounced it as an invention of the Pope, and claimed that the voluntary baptism of an adult was the only valid ordinance. Among the English exiles in Holland, a congregation became known as *Baptists* as they adopted the doctrines of baptism by immersion as the correct form, and on their return to England brought this and other doctrines with them. Those who denied the doctrines of the Holy Trinity were known as *Unitarians*.

The *Society of Friends* or *Quakers* was a group founded by George Fox. He was born in 1624 in Leicestershire, and being a man of honesty of purpose was impelled by his conscience to preach the truth as he understood it from the scriptures. In 1650 he was imprisoned, and during his imprisonment he bade one of the justices, Gervas Bennet, to "tremble at the word of the Lord," whereupon the justice returned a derisive answer giving George Fox and his friends the name of *Quakers*. By 1652 there were meetings of these people in many parts of central and northern England; in 1654 they first preached in Wales.

James I (1603-1625), and Charles I (1625-1649), gradually assumed more power, became despotic, and persecuted

any who did not agree with the state. Charles I appointed men to introduce Romish doctrine, and to turn religion into an attack on English liberty. The majority of the clergy and people were Puritans. Parliament met in 1629 to protest, but the King dissolved it. From then on thousands immigrated to America. By 1640, when the King was forced to call Parliament back, Presbyterianism was strong among the middle classes. There was another party which had also risen during exile in Holland who, in the future were to be called *Independents*. They supported, but differed from, the Presbyterians. Street fighting between those who supported Reform and those who supported the Episcopacy and the King created alarm, and the nicknames Roundheads and Cavaliers were given to the factions. Parliament was bent on stripping the King of despotic powers, and the King was resolved on war which broke out in August, 1642. The Scottish Government signed a "Covenant," and the English House of Commons "with uplifted hands" pledged to observe it, and to "bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdoms" (England, Scotland, and Ireland) "to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion . . . that we, and our posterity after us, may as brethren live in faith and love" and eradicate Papistry and superstition, and to preserve liberty.

With the rise of men like Oliver Cromwell and other leaders in Parliament, who ruled the country during the Civil War and until 1660, Nonconformity increased in numbers though it was divided into groups, such as Presbyterians (who wanted to reform the Church of England), Independents (later called Congregationalists), Baptists, and Quakers (who were members of the Society of Friends). With the triumph of the Battle of Naseby in 1645, Parliament had defeated the King and laid the foundations for the political and religious freedoms known today. At this defeat of the King the Presbyterians wanted the Church of England to be the only church, and wanted the sectaries or other Nonconformists suppressed. However, a reorganization of the Church of England was effected, and Presbyterian and Independent ministers were gradually settled in the parishes, displacing the Popish and Royalist rectors and vicars who were ejected. Laws instituted by Oliver Cromwell protected the Quakers and other Nonconformists. Jews

were permitted to return to England, the first time since they had been expelled in 1290.

Oliver Cromwell set up military men throughout the country; Parliament consisted of his nominees, and he was virtually a dictator. When Cromwell died, his son, Richard, succeeded him, but for a short time. The people were tired of military rule and wanted the King. In May, 1660, Charles II became King of England, and Puritanism fell from power. The men who had formed the army, and the Cromwellian government, became farmers and traders again.

With the return of a king came corruption and debauchery in Court and Parliament, but at large the English people were what Puritanism had made them—serious, earnest, sober in life, industrious, and lovers of freedom. Those clergymen who had been ejected from their parishes during the Civil War, if living, were reinstated. Nearly two thousand rectors and vicars (or about one-fifth of the clergy) were driven from their parishes as Nonconformists. Among these men were some of the finest thinkers in the country. By thus forcing out the Puritans, the Church of England suffered great injury intellectually and soon became stagnant, a condition that lasted for several decades. From the time of the Act of Uniformity in 1662 that required clergymen, university fellows, and schoolmasters to accept everything in the *Book of Common Prayer* of the Church of England, the rise and influence of separate and various Nonconformist churches can be seen.

Persecution of Nonconformists continued from time to time, but broke down against the wealth and numbers of these new sectarians. After the Revolution of 1688, when James II was deposed, the Toleration Act in 1689 brought freedom of worship to the Nonconformist. Roman Catholic priests and schoolteachers were, until 1778, liable to life imprisonment.

In 1707, when Great Britain was formed by the Union of Scotland with England and Wales, Scottish law and legal administration remained unaltered, and the Episcopal Church in England and Wales, and the Presbyterian Church in Scotland remained unchanged. For political reasons the Tories wanted to exclude the Nonconformists from offices in municipal governments. In 1711 they passed the Occasional

Conformity Bill through Parliament, which was directed against those Protestant Nonconformists who would qualify for office in the boroughs (towns and cities) by attending and receiving the sacrament at the Church of England once a year, and then worshipping in the Nonconformist chapel of their choice regularly. This measure was not successfully enforced and was repealed in 1715.

For several decades following 1700, religion seemed to be stagnant. Many Church of England ministers held parishes in *plurality*—that is they held the income of two or more parishes at one time. Often they did not reside in any of them but poorly paid a curate to do the work. The population was increasing in numbers, but nothing was done to instruct the poorer classes in religion, so that ignorance and brutality abounded. The *middle class*, however, remained religious.



PLATE I. John Wesley (1703-1791) preaching at a village cross.

John Wesley (1703-1791), (see PLATE I) and his brother, Charles, became leaders in reviving religious fervor. By 1784 there were at least 354 Wesleyan Methodist chapels, and there were probably more than 100,000 members by 1791. The influence of these two brothers affected every part of English religion. Howel Harris in 1738 founded the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists. About 1756 a religious society known as the Countess of Huntingdon's *New Connexion* was founded. Whitfield was the great preacher and exponent of Calvinistic Methodism. Robert Raikes of Gloucester opened the first Sunday Schools for children. The *Revivalists* also left their deep mark upon the Church of England so that the ministers became devoted to their work among the parishioners. They formed a great Evangelical movement, bringing the moral and Christian teachings of the Bible to their flocks. Religion cleansed England of the impurities of the previous era and prepared the people for a greater understanding of the purposes of life. Although since its founding in 1830, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had been prospering in the United States and Canada, it was not until 1837 that its doctrines were presented to the British people. According to *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain*,² the number who joined the Church between 1837 and 1937 was 126,593, of whom 52,387 are of record as having left the mother country for America. This emigration figure does not include those who left without their departure being noted in any of the Church records. The figures denoting British families who joined in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and elsewhere are not given.

It is important to understand the significance of these religious contentions in relation to our ancestors. In England, the early Reformers had no intention of severing themselves from the Church of England; they only wanted to execute changes within that church itself. From time to time they gained sufficient power to force some changes, but differences of opinion between those who were extreme and those who were conservative created insurmountable difficulties. The Church of England became a Protestant Church,

2. *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain*, Richard L. Evans, Salt Lake City, Deseret News Press, 1937.

but retained a government by bishops, and as an "Established" or "State" church, was subject to Parliament.

Those Protestants who would not, because of diverse views, conform to the doctrines, practices, and government of the Church of England, were named and classed as Nonconformists or Dissenters. At first they met secretly, and later openly, ultimately building their own meeting houses or chapels. They adopted different names, such as Baptist, Independent, Congregational, Presbyterian, Quaker (or Society of Friends), and later came the Calvinistic Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist. Many of the members of these earlier denominations did not always agree, and cleavages led to the organizing of a host of newer sects, some within a union and others entirely independent. The names of all these denominations cannot be listed here, but some have unusual names like New Jerusalemite, Plymouth Brethren.

Since men are at liberty to choose for themselves, a person's conception of a doctrine may change. Thus it is possible to find in the history of a family several changes in church affiliations, sometimes several such changes in one generation. Some families are themselves divided with husband, wife, and children being communicants of different churches. At various times there have been, both among the rich and the poor, those who revolted against religion and were unbelievers, refraining from church attendance of any kind.

The parish registers, described in another chapter, were kept by the ministers and clerks of the Established Church of England. Unless these men were unusually diligent, they recorded those, and only those, who were baptized (christened), married, or buried by the clergymen of the Church of England. All others, whether Protestants, Roman Catholics, Jews, or other individuals who avoided baptism (christening), marriage, or burial by a Church of England minister, were rarely recorded in the parish registers.³ Since 1837 when General Registration commenced, civil authorities have the power to register births, marriages, and deaths without regard to the religious affiliations of the persons.

Any registers of births, baptisms, christenings, burials, deaths, and sometimes marriages, kept by Nonconformist Denominations are usually known by the following terms:

3. See Chapter 17, "The Roman Catholics and Their Records", for details about the Act of Parliament in 1695 concerning children born in the parish but not baptised (christened) by a Church of England clergyman.

- i. *Non-Parochial* registers, the name inferring a register that was not kept by the minister of the Church of England parish.
- ii. *Nonconformist* registers is the most commonly-used name, indicating a register kept by some Nonconformist group.
- iii. Many registers are referred to by the name of the denomination, such as *Presbyterian* registers, Registers of the *Baptist* chapel, *Quaker* records, *Friends* records or some such similar designation.

What may one expect to find in the records of the Nonconformists?

- i. The minister recorded baptisms, marriages, and burials at which he officiated or which took place among his congregation, as also births where there may have been no infant baptism. Also records of membership, excommunication, and transfers from one congregation to another when members changed residences. Some contain supplementary information on the history and genealogy of those mentioned, but many of these records are disappointingly barren of full particulars. Generally, they are similar in content to the parish registers. Marriages are recorded in some denominations, but between 1754 and 1837 the majority of Nonconformists were married in the Church of England parish churches in order to comply with the marriage laws. No doubt many Nonconformists were married in the Church of England for convenience when there was no chapel of their own denomination easily accessible.

When and Why to Search in the Non-parochial registers.

Consideration should be given to the following possibilities:

- i. If any family traditions indicate Nonconformity, enquiry should be made as to whether the name of the denomination is also known, or failing that, the name of the chapel or village where the family was said to have worshipped.
- ii. Indications of Nonconformity may be noted by examining the copies of marriage records where the marriage took place since 1837 in a Nonconformist chapel. A marriage in the Established Church of England is not absolute proof of both parties being Episcopalian as many Nonconformists will marry in the parish church, sometimes because of "old custom" of the bride's or bridegroom's family, or due to the fact that the Nonconformist denomination may not have had a nearby meeting house registered for marriages. A marriage in a register office

may be a partial clue, as many Nonconformists married civilly because their denomination did not have a registered meeting house.

- iii. Some families have old *memorial cards* that were sent out after a funeral stating the death and place of funeral or burial of close relatives. Some indication of the religion may come out of careful investigation. It is often wise to look in old Bibles, prayerbooks, and other religious books handed down in the family, as also award certificates for attendance at Sunday School and church, to see if indications of any denomination are given.
- iv. Occasionally one may be able to trace in a newspaper or magazine obituary a biography of a deceased relative giving clear details of the religion of the family.
- v. If, having no previous indications of Nonconformity, one searches the parish registers of the locality where the family was said to be established, and cannot find the clear connections desired, this may be a direct indication that, although, the family was residing in the district, it avoided the parish church. However, in such instances, it is wise to copy all information relating to the families of the same surname from the parish register for a period of immediate concern. Baptisms, marriages, and burials thus listed may fit into a pattern when all other record searches are compared in a later analysis.
- vi. When parish registers show marriages and burials of a certain surname far out of proportion to the number of baptisms of the said name, this may indicate Nonconformity.

Where are the records of the Nonconformist chapels?

Some thought should be given as to where the records might be and as to which record may be needed to trace a particular family.

- i. In connection with the Registration Act that came into force in 1837, the British Government set in motion a survey of the records kept by the Nonconformist denominations. All such religious bodies were requested to submit their records to the Registrar General, Somerset House, London. Those records that passed the conditions of authentication were retained by the Registrar General. The collection relates to England and Wales only.
 - a. A complete list of the records at Somerset House down to 1837 is available, describing the contents and periods covered by each register.⁴ There are over six thousand

4. *Lists of Non-Parochial Registers and Records in the Custody of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1841.

volumes listed. The Quaker records are separately listed at the back of the volume. The call number of this list, at the Genealogical Society Library, Salt Lake City is R6A37 (also F. Eng 32 and F. Eng 34).

There is also a copy of the list at the General Register Office, Somerset House, and some local libraries in England have a copy of the list.

- ii. Most Nonconformist denominations complied with the terms of the request, with the following exceptions:
 - a. Records that were not acceptable because of doubt as to the authenticity of the books.
 - b. The Roman Catholic Church did not wish to comply for reasons mostly concerning their internal church organization system.
 - c. The Jewish Synagogues did not deposit their records.
 - d. It is possible that certain Nonconformists permitted the request to pass without any action on their part. Many records of Welsh Nonconformist chapels were not deposited.
- iii. Some denominations deposited registers at Somerset House and retained a copy for reference. Some of these copies, as well as additional registers which were not deposited may be found as follows:
 - a. The Quakers (or Society of Friends) have a complete set of records from the early 1600s to the present time.
 - b. Some registers and records are in the possession of societies formed by denominations for the preservation of history and have central archives.
 - c. It is known that some old registers have been placed in public and private libraries.
 - d. The present minister, chapel warden, or the secretary of the congregation concerned may still have the old registers or know where they are housed.

What period of time do the records of the Nonconformists cover?

Although Nonconformity goes back earlier than 1600, very few records of the denominations extend that early. Such groups as the Presbyterians and Independents (Congregationalists) probably attended the Church of England for such events as christenings, marriages, and burials, especially during the times when they had controlling influence on the Established Church. This is also true of the followers of Wesley, who, even though worshipping in their own chapels, yet had christenings, marriages, and

burials performed by Church of England clergymen. Therefore in some instances the parish registers are a source for their records.

As the various denominations grew in strength, the necessity of records became apparent, and many of these records still exist. There are few prior 1700, but from then until about 1800 a great number are extant. Many chapels, founded at an early date, do not have registers much before 1800, with the majority of such registers commencing at an even later date. The registers of the Nonconformists housed at Somerset House are concluded in 1837, except for a few that continue to 1857.

What areas did Nonconformist Chapels and Ministers serve?

Because Nonconformists did not conform to the State or Established Church of England, they met for worship in their homes, or wherever opportunity offered, their spiritual needs being supplied by itinerant preachers. The preacher encouraged the building of a chapel, near to which he might reside. He then served worshippers in more distant places by traveling to their villages or towns. Some chapels were built as a central meeting place to serve the religious requirements of the people in the surrounding villages. Some of these members walked ten miles over poor roads to get to the chapel. These various congregations, with or without chapels, formed into a *union*, or *circuit*, or *conference*, or some other name chosen by the Protestant denomination concerned. The district served by the preacher covered a large area, including within it many widely scattered families, and such a region or area did not have any relation to a parish boundary. The preacher served several different chapels situated in the villages contained within the district.

Is the title given to a Nonconformist Register sometimes misleading?

A search in the parish registers of Penwortham, Longton, Leyland, and Preston, all in Lancashire, failed to trace the birth or christening records of a family, although all indications were that they resided in those localities. It has already been pointed out⁵ that the geographical description of a parish should be found before embarking on any

5. See Chapter 12, "How To Use Parish Registers."

searches. Concerning the places named above, the following are part of the descriptions found in *A Topographical Dictionary of England*:⁶

- Penwortham.* No mention of any Nonconformist meeting places.
- Leyland.* A place of worship for Wesleyan Methodists was erected in 1814.
- Longton.* There is a place of worship for Wesleyan Methodists.
- Preston.* There are two places of worship for Independents, and one each for Baptists, the Society of Friends, Primitive and Wesleyan Methodists, and Unitarians, also two Roman Catholic Chapels.

A check of the map of the locality will show how each place is related to its surrounding parishes or places. (See Fig. 1.)

The official list of Nonconformist Registers in the possession of the Registrar General, Somerset House, London,⁷ shows:

- Penwortham.* Not mentioned.
- Leyland.* Not mentioned.
- Longton.* Not mentioned.
- Preston.* Independent Chapel founded 1789. Registers commence 1790.
 Presbyterian Chapel founded 1718. Registers commence 1763.
 Baptist Chapel founded 1782. Registers commence 1782.
 Independent Chapel founded 1808. Registers commence 1803.
 Primitive Methodist Chapel founded 1822. Registers commence 1824.
 Lady Huntingdon's New Connexion founded 1825. Registers commence 1826.

A further check of the map shows that places close to Penwortham, Leyland, and Longton, are Brindle, Hoole, Croston, Tarleton, Hesketh, and Beconsall, none of which is mentioned in the official list of Non-Parochial Registers, already mentioned.

6. For places in England (including Monmouthshire) use *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (4 vols.; London, 1831.). For places in Wales use *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales* (2 vols.; London, 1833.), *op. cit.*

7. *Lists of Non-Parochial Registers*, *op. cit.*

A search was then made of the registers of the six chapels listed under Preston, Lancashire, but without tracing the records of the family concerned. The map shows that the River Ribble is a natural boundary between places on the north, and places on the south, of the river. However, natural boundaries such as mountains and rivers do not limit the conscience. If the family being sought were followers of some Nonconformist denomination, such as the Wesleyan Methodists, and if there were congregations in the locality, where are their registers? If they have been deposited in the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, are they listed under the name of some other town or parish? Again the map was checked, listing the names of a number of surrounding parishes, towns, and villages. Kirkham, Freckleton, Woodplumpton, Broughton, and a few other places within a reasonable distance could be listed, but in cases such as *unions*, *circuits*, and *conferences*, it is very difficult to determine what distance may be even remotely reasonable.

The official list of Non-Parochial registers was again checked, this time starting at the commencement of the county and going through the whole list, to see if any of the nearby places are mentioned. The following reference was noted in particular:

Freckleton, Parish of Kirkham, Wesleyan Chapel, registers commence 1810.

This register was then checked at the office of the Registrar General, Somerset House, London. The fly-leaf of the register contains the following:

Freckleton Wesleyan Chapel in the Parish of Kirkham; at Longton in the Parish of Penwortham; at Leyland in the Parish of Leyland; and Preston, all in the County of Lancaster. Methodist Society in or near Preston, Lancs.

The entry of the birth and baptism of the ancestor was traced in this volume, together with information on other members of the same family. It is interesting to note the map shown in the illustration, and also the distance of these places from the chief town of the locality, Preston: (See Fig. I. page 244.)



Fig. 1. Map illustrating position of Freckleton in relation to Longton, Penwortham, Leyland, and Preston.

(Based on *The Genealogists' Atlas of Lancashire*, Liverpool: 1930.)

Freckleton	is 7½ miles west of Preston.
Leyland	is 5 miles south of Preston.
Longton	is 5 miles southwest of Preston.
Penwortham	is 2 miles southwest of Preston.

Longton is therefore 12½ miles from Freckleton, by way of Preston, at the point where the bridge crosses the River Ribble. Within the area covered by this register, the population in 1831 was in excess of 65,000 persons. It is most likely that the chief chapel of this Wesleyan group was at Freckleton, although there were chapels at Longton, Leyland, and Preston, but the official list of the Registrar General, Somerset House, London, merely refers to the name of the chapel which was named as the first chapel on the fly-leaf of the original Nonconformist register. It is also very likely that the same register covered a much larger area than even the fly-leaf indicates, for an entry was noted in the

register for a *Mary Ann Charnock*, born in 1822, at Assit-whistle, undoubtedly a phonetic spelling of Oswaldtwistle, a town 15 miles east of Preston, and therefore about 22 miles from Freckleton.

A similar situation is found in Wales and Monmouthshire, but with the added difficulty of identifying the place-names and the spelling of the places, making searching more expensive in attempting to trace the register book relating to a district.

For example, the Nonconformist register for the New House Chapel of the Independents (or Congregationalists) in the parish of Llanedy, Carmarthenshire, appears to be a register of a circuit. It relates to persons residing in the following places:

Llanedy, Carmarthenshire	
Llangennech, Carmarthenshire	(4 miles southwest of Llanedy)
Llannon, Carmarthenshire	(5 miles west of Llanedy)
Llanelly, Carmarthenshire	(7 miles southwest of Llanedy)
Llandilo-Talybont, Glamorganshire	(4 miles southeast of Llanedy)
Loughor, Glamorganshire	(4 miles east of Llanedy)

Note how the *circuit* register covers places in two counties, the places mentioned being on the boundary of Carmarthenshire and Glamorganshire. There is no statement in the register as to whether the places named had Independent Chapels of their own, or whether the children were registered and christened at the periodical visits of the clergyman.

A few Welsh Nonconformist registers have been deposited with the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Cardiganshire; others might still be in the custody of the clergymen of the respective denominations. There is also a large collection of the Registers with the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, that were deposited there at the same time as the registers from the chapels of the English Nonconformists.

In addition to the registers deposited by the ministers in charge of the individual chapels or circuits, there are also two registries that were maintained by the various denominations. These are:

1. The Three Denominations. The quotations are taken from official publications issued by the Registrar General, London, England:

The Registers of the Presbyterian, the Independent, and the Baptist Denominations. These three bodies, although differing materially from each other in tenets and discipline, and having distinct Boards for the management of their separate affairs . . . have . . . been characterized under the general description of "The Three Denominations."⁸

In addition to the registers transmitted . . . from the Dissenting Chapels of the Three Denominations, a Register of Births was commenced in 1742 by the London Society of Lay Deputies, of the congregations of the Protestant Dissenters of the Three Denominations in London and within twelve miles of London. The Register was established at Dr. Williams's Library in Red Cross Street.

The Books contain nearly 50,000 entries of births, together with the certificates of the same.⁹

These cited records, formerly kept at the Registry in Dr. Williams's Library, Red Cross Street, Cripplegate, London, and dating from 1742 to 1837, are now kept by the Registrar General, General Register Office, Somerset House, London, and a full list of the records is to be found under London in the official list.¹⁰ The registers include records of some births which took place outside of the London localities.

2. The General Registry of the Wesleyan Methodists. The Registry is described in the official publications as:

The Wesleyan Methodists, independently of their Congregational Registers, instituted in 1818, a Metropolitan Office in Paternoster Row (London), for the registration of the Births and Baptisms occurring amongst their different religious communities . . . they contain the Births and Baptisms of 10,291 children.¹¹

The Registrar furnishes the Ministers on the various [Wesleyan Methodist] circuits with printed forms on parchment, which are signed by the parents of the child . . . These forms are signed in duplicate and transmitted to the Registry. The Registrar thereupon enters the particulars in a large folio Register.¹²

The above records, formerly kept at the Registry at 66, Paternoster Row, London, and dating from 1818 to 1837,

8. Report of The Commissioners appointed to inquire into . . . Registers or Records of Births or Baptisms, Deaths or Burials, and Marriages in England and Wales other than the Parochial Registers. London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1838. Page 9.

9. *Ibid.*, page 9.

10. See Footnote 4.

11. See Footnote 8.

12. See Footnote 8.

are now kept by the Registrar General, General Register Office, Somerset House, London, and a full list of the records is to be found under London in the official list.¹³ The registers include the records of some births which took place outside of the London areas.

At the time of writing, the charges for searching the registers and records of the various Nonconformist chapels, now kept at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, W.C. 2., England, are stated by the Registrar General, as follows:

It must be clearly understood that search in the [Nonconformist] Registers cannot be undertaken unless the precise register is specified or the religious denomination and name and locality of the Chapel at which the Register was formerly kept is stated. The fee for searching is usually 1s0d [about 15 cents] per volume if the applicant attends at this office [General Register Office, London] to make the search personally.

If application is made through the post the search fee is usually 3s 9d [about 55 cents] for each volume. Should a certified copy of the entry be required an additional fee of 2s 6d [about 35 cents] should be forwarded.¹⁴

In order to judge more easily how considerable are the numbers of sectarian chapels and registers, a "Table of Non-parochial Registers" has been prepared. This table, printed below, was compiled from the official list available at Somerset House, London, and relates only to registers kept there. From the following table it is possible to note the founding date and also the earliest date of the register of a particular denomination within a county, as well as the number of chapels concerned. For the names of the towns and chapels within the county, it is necessary to refer to the official list mentioned earlier in this chapter. The approximate totals for England and Wales for the denominations mentioned in the table are 3463 chapels and 4731 volumes of registers. To this must be added 40 chapels of certain foreign churches (holding meetings in England) with 104 registers, and an untotaled number of Quaker (Friends) chapels with 1501 registers, or a grand total of about 6336 volumes of Non-parochial registers at Somerset House.

13. See Footnote 4.

14. Leaflet marked "P.A.S. 5.," from General Register Office, London.

COUNTY (English)	BAPTISTS				INDEPENDENTS (Congregationalists)				CALVINISTIC METHODISTS				WESLEYAN METHODISTS			
	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	No. of Chapels
Beds	1662	1709	13		1730	9				1763	1798		1763	1798	7	7
Berks	1547	1764	4	1670	1705	16				1810	1796		1810	1796	5	5
Bucks	1685	1773	10	1660	1765	18				1779	1792		1779	1792	2	2
Cambs	1660	1778	9	1689	1688	19				1815	1796		1815	1796	4	4
Cheshire	1700	1813	2	1670	1709	22	1813	1805	2	1770	1793		1770	1793	32	32
Cornwall	1789	1760	4	1700	1769	17				1760	1794		1760	1794	27	27
Cumberland	1808	1797	1	1653	1700	10				1747	1806		1747	1806	7	7
Derby	1750	1753	4	1662	1703	20				1762	1794		1762	1794	22	22
Devon	1600	1767	19	1662	1697	56				1755	1787		1755	1787	18	18
Dorset	1787	1778	4	1640	1741	20				1766	1796		1766	1796	8	8
Durham	1665	1768	6	1719	1717	13				1760	1797		1760	1797	9	9
Essex	1668	1775	11	1662	1707	60				1740	1793		1740	1793	7	7
Gloucs	1650	1651	10	1668	1712	32				1748	1799		1748	1799	13	13
Hants	1704	1785	10	1660	1691	32	1760	1762	2	1782	1799		1782	1799	11	11
Hereford	1656	1747	5	1662	1690	7				1800	1805		1800	1805	2	2
Herts	1675	1717	6	1668	1748	25				1823	1825		1823	1825	4	4
Hunts	1670	1789	5	1630	1742	2				1797	1797		1797	1797	2	2
Kent	1600	1650	23	1646	1646	40	1828	1828	1	1764	1796		1764	1796	35	35
Lancs	1669	1755	25	1667	1717	68	1800	1803	1	1750	1784		1750	1784	87	87
Leics	1667	1752	17	1694	1733	15				1781	1795		1781	1795	15	15
Lincs	1650	1703	13	1720	1774	15				1768	1801		1768	1801	18	18
London	1600	1656	16	1660	1644	77	1814	1738	5	1777	1779		1777	1779	25	25
Middlesex	1783	1783	3	1650	1758	21				1809	1807		1809	1807	2	2
Norfolk	1660	1761	19	1650	1692	21				1793	1795		1793	1795	14	14
Northants	1680	1755	18	1662	1692	26				1790	1801		1790	1801	15	15
Northumberland	1725	1781	3	1720	1746	9				1786	1788		1786	1788	7	7
Notts	1742	1742	11	1655	1706	16				1780	1787		1780	1787	14	14
Oxford	1662	1647	6	1719	1685	11				1760	1812		1760	1812	5	5
Rutland	1710	1768	2	1717	1785	3				1816	1816		1816	1816	1	1
Shrops	1620	1766	7	1662	1767	23	1814	1821	1	1787	1796		1787	1796	9	9
Somerset	1652	1679	15	1670	1681	38	1755	1775	2	1757	1780		1757	1780	21	21
Staffs	1786	1793	9	1662	1777	29				1760	1795		1760	1795	19	19
Suffolk	1758	1785	17	1646	1689	33				1777	1800		1777	1800	8	8
Surrey	1777	1781	6	1662	1698	34				1817	1817		1817	1817	4	4
Sussex	1700	1669	11	1662	1698	27	1820	1825	1	1789	1795		1789	1795	6	6
Warws	1700	1750	15	1686	1688	24	1785	1796	2	1786	1802		1786	1802	7	7
Westmorland	—	—	—	1662	1757	3				1780	1797		1780	1797	4	4
Wilts	1660	1767	15	1566	1723	39				1760	1795		1760	1795	7	7
Worcs	1649	1756	10	1662	1699	9				1766	1788		1766	1788	11	11
Yorks	1650	1685	47	1650	1654	138				1740	1753		1740	1753	131	131

COUNTY (English)	PRIMITIVE METHODISTS				NEW CONNEXION METHODISTS ^a				PRESBYTERIAN				LADY HUNTINGDON'S ^b			
	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	
Beds	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	1697	1723	2	1816	—	—	
Berks	1830	1831	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1816	1	
Bucks	1832	1832	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Cambs	1823	1824	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1780	1787	1	
Cheshire	1810	1811	4	1797	—	—	—	1798	—	1590	1676	10	1818	1819	2	
Cornwall	1810	1832	2	—	—	—	—	1834	—	—	—	—	1800	1800	2	
Cumberland	1823	1825	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1700	1745	2	—	1789	1	
Derby	1810	1821	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	1694	1698	7	1801	1787	1	
Devon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1662	1672	13	—	—	—	
Dorset	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1670	1720	4	1822	1822	1	
Durham	1810	1823	3	1809	—	—	—	1811	—	1688	1688	7	—	—	—	
Essex	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1796	1796	1	1790	1784	1	
Gloucs	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1699	1740	3	1788	1790	3	
Hants	1832	1833	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1700	1676	3	1780	1784	1	
Hereford	1826	1828	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1793	1814	1	
Herts	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1697	1729	3	1768	1806	2	
Hunts	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1812	1820	1	—	—	—	
Kent	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1700	1710	3	1769	1776	6	
Lancs	1822	1824	7	1797	—	—	—	1794	—	1670	1644	29	1789	1789	5	
Leics	1810	1820	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	1690	1706	5	—	—	—	
Lincs	1813	1825	5	1827	—	—	—	1827	—	1700	1707	3	1774	1799	1	
London	1804	1806	1	1819	—	—	—	1820	—	1708	1705	11	1777	1783	7	
Middlesex	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1652	1727	3	—	—	—	
Norfolk	1821	1822	8	—	—	—	—	1835	—	1642	1691	5	1778	1752	1	
Northants	—	1824	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1827	1820	1	—	—	—	
Northumberland	1810	1823	4	1797	—	—	—	1798	—	1672	1752	8	—	—	—	
Notts	1818	1827	1	—	—	—	—	1787	—	—	1690	2	—	—	—	
Oxford	1827	1835	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1740	1789	2	1793	1790	1	
Rutland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Shrops	1820	1822	5	1820	—	—	—	1829	—	1691	1692	4	—	—	—	
Somerset	1828	1813	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	1646	1694	11	1765	1788	3	
Staffs	1810	1819	7	1778	—	—	—	1789	—	1700	1726	3	—	—	—	
Suffolk	1810	1832	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1689	1689	4	—	—	—	
Surrey	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Sussex	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1688	1789	2	1767	1781	6	
Warws	1831	1831	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1660	1695	7	1785	1796	1	
Westmorland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1720	1687	1	—	—	—	
Wilts	1825	1829	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1610	1687	3	—	—	—	
Worcs	1823	1833	1	1829	—	—	—	1829	—	1696	1722	5	1782	1784	4	
Yorks	1819	1822	17	1797	—	—	—	1779	—	1640	1650	15	—	—	—	

a. See also, Lady Huntingdon's (New Connexion).

b. See also, New Connexion Methodists.

COUNTY (English)	BIBLE CHRISTIAN			MORAVIAN			NEW JERUSALEMITES			ROMAN CATHOLIC		
	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels	Earliest Founding Date	Earliest Register	No. of Chapels
Beds	—	—	—	1742	1743	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cheshire	—	—	—	1755	1784	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cornwall	1816	1817	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cumberland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1833	1833	1
Derby	—	—	—	1746	1746	1	1817	1817	2	—	—	—
Devon	1815	1818	5	1768	1785	1	—	—	—	1786	1755	1
Dorset	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1739	12
Durham	—	—	—	—	—	—	1813	1813	1	—	—	—
Essex	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gloucs	—	—	—	1755	1757	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hants	1815	1824	2	1759	1784	1	—	—	—	—	1803	1
Hereford	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Herts	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1832	1832	1
Hunts	—	—	—	1823	1823	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kent	1815	1820	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lancs.	1800	1800	1	1785	1786	2	1800	1803	6	—	1783	1
Leics	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1828	1	—	—	—
Lincs	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1782	1797	2
London	1823	1823	1	1741	1741	1	1816	1816	1	—	—	—
Northants	—	—	—	1796	1796	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Northumberland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1700	1767	10
Notts	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1828	1827	1
Oxford	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1500	1758	1
Somerset	1822	1823	2	1755	1755	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Surrey	1830	1835	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sussex	1815	1824	2	—	—	—	1791	1791	1	—	—	—
Warws	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1828	1822	1
Westmorland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1724	1782	1
Wills	—	—	—	1748	1748	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Yorks	—	—	—	1723	1742	5	1781	1781	3	1560	1663	46

[illegible]

1. *Foreign Churches* established as congregations in England:

i. French Protestant or Huguenot: ¹⁵	1684
ii. French Protestant and Walloon ¹⁶	1567
iii. German Lutheran	1669
iv. Swiss Church	1762
v. Dutch Royal Chapel	1689
vi. St. Petersburg Independent	1818

15. There is an excellent article "Huguenot Records" by Miss S. Minet in *The Genealogists' Magazine* for March 1956. (*The Genealogists' Magazine*, London: March 1956, commencing at page 149.)

16. *Ibid.*

Chapter Sixteen

THE JEWS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE COMMONWEALTH

As early as the reign of William the Conqueror who reigned from 1066 to 1087, Jewish merchants were invited to settle in England. About 1290 all the Jews were expelled from England, and it is estimated that 16,000 were forced out of the country. During the Commonwealth period (1649 to 1660), Jewish merchants applied for entry into England and were refused, but with the sanction of Oliver Cromwell a few were permitted to settle in London and Oxford.

During the ensuing 300 years there have been two principal classes of Jews who have migrated to the British Isles:

- i. The *Sephardic* Jews, who came from Spain, Portugal and Italy.
- ii. The *Ashkenazi* Jews from Eastern Europe, Germany, Bohemia, and Holland.

The first to arrive were the *Sephardic* Jews from Spain and Portugal who came to London in 1657. They were known as *Marranos*, and although they pretended to be Christians, they followed the Jewish faith by secretly meeting in private homes. From 1657 to 1750 there was a steady stream of *Sephardic Jewish* families coming into the country, mainly via The Netherlands.

The migration of the *Ashkenazi* Jews commenced about 1680 from Germany, Bohemia, and Holland. In the latter part of the 18th Century small groups arrived from Poland. From 1830 to 1900 a large migration from Holland took place, comprising many families engaged in the marketing of fruit and in the cigar trade. It should also be noted that Holland, in common with many other continental countries, had a mixture of both *Sephardic* and *Ashkenazi* Jews, and some intermarriage had taken place between the two groups.

Migrations of Russian and Polish Jews became pronounced around 1870 and the numbers increased in the

1880s and 1890s and continued in large numbers until the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Many of these were garment workers (tailors) and furriers. Then there was a falling off of migration until the 1930s when large numbers of Jewish refugees poured into Great Britain from all over Europe. Some of the Jews have become very prosperous, and many are noted for their industry.

Early Jewish Settlements in England.

Bath, Somerset. First residents, 1736, were mainly Ashkenazi. Congregation founded 1800.

Bedford, Beds. First residents in 1785; congregation founded by Michael Joseph in 1803.

Birmingham, Warws. Moses Aaron born there in 1718. Community and cemetery in 1730: Congregation founded in 1780.

Brighton, Sussex. Congregation founded in the reign of George III, (1760-1820).

Bristol, Glouc. First residents prior to 1754: synagogue built in 1786.

Chatham, Kent. Congregation founded in 1780.

Cheltenham, Glouc. Congregation founded in 1824, and a cemetery in 1844.

Coventry, Warws. First residents 1800.

Exeter, Devon. First residents 1733; congregation founded in 1763 and a cemetery in 1800.

Hull, Yorks. Congregation founded in 1780.

Leeds, Yorks. The largest Jewish center in the provinces, but of recent settlement, augmented mainly by the late 19th Century immigrants from Eastern Europe who found employment in the clothing industry. First residents in 1823.

Liverpool, Lancs. First residents in 1750. This group died out, and the second settlement took place in 1780.

London area (*see list later in chapter*).

Manchester, Lancs. First residents about 1770; congregation founded in 1780 and a cemetery in 1794.

Newcastle on Tyne, Northumberland. First residents in 1775. Congregation founded in 1831.

Norwich, Norfolk. First residents in 1789; congregation founded in 1813.

Nottingham, Notts. Congregation founded in 1823

Plymouth, Devon. First residents 1740; congregation founded in 1752; synagogue built in 1761.

Portsmouth, Hants. A flourishing early Jewish community; congregation founded prior to 1749.

Sheffield, Yorks. A recent settlement as at Leeds. Congregation founded in 1860.

Southampton, Hants. First residents 1786; congregation founded in 1817.

Settlements in Wales.

Cardiff, Glam. First settled in 1787; congregation founded in 1840. Easily confused with Gentiles due to surnames, such as Isaacs, Davids, Jacobs, Josephs, Marks, Abrahams.

Swansea, Glam. First residents 1730; synagogue founded in 1780.

Settlements in Scotland.

Edinburgh, Edin. Synagogue founded in 1816.

Glasgow, Lanark. Synagogue founded in 1840.

Settlements in Ireland.

Belfast, Antrim. First residents 1814; synagogue built in 1872.

Dublin, Dublin. First residents 1660.

Cork, Cork. First residents in mid-18th Century.

Limerick, Limk. Residents 1785 scattered.

Settlements in London.

London had three ancient Ashkenazi synagogues and one Sephardic synagogue. The list which follows shows the date of foundation. The early registers marked with an asterisk have been microfilmed and are at the Genealogical Society's Library in Salt Lake City.

Bayswater	1863	
Borough	1810	(Re-consecrated in 1927)
Brixton	1921	

Brondesbury	1905	
Central	1870	
Cricklewood	1931	
Dalston	1885	
Dolis Hill	recent	
East London	1877	(very popular)
Golders Green	1922	
Great Synagogue	1690*	
Hackney	1898	
Hambro	17th	century Closed down 1936.*
Hammersmith	1890	
Hampstead	1892	
Hendon	1935	
New Synagogue	1761*	
New West End	1879	
North London	1868	
St. Johns Wood	1882	
Stoke Newington	recent	
Willesden	recent	
West London Reformed	1840	

Spanish and Portugese Synagogue (Sephardic) Bevis Marks consecrated 1701. Registers from 1670 (marriages printed 1670-1837).

The first Jewish free school was established in 1817 in Bell Lane, Spitalfields, where education was provided free for all Jewish children. The ancient Sephardic cemetery located at 253 Mile End Road is no longer in use. The ancient Ashkenazi cemeteries are at Grove Road, Lauriston Road, and 329 Mile End Road. The early Jewish settlements in London were around St. James Dukes Place, Spitalfields, and Whitechapel.

Australia	First Jewish residents 1817; twenty in number came from England. In 1828 there were 300, located mainly in Sydney where a synagogue was built in 1844. First residents in Adelaide in 1838. Congregation founded in 1848.
Canada	There was a Sephardic Synagogue for the Spanish and Portugese community at Montreal in 1768.
New Zealand	First residents 1831, all immigrants from England. A synagogue founded at Auckland in 1841.
South Africa	A congregation founded at Capetown in 1841. Johannesburg now has a large Jewish population.
West Indies	Early (about 1660) Sephardic communities in the Barbadoes, Trinidad, and at Kingston, Jamaica. The records of these communities are on microfilm at the Jewish Historical Society at Cincinnati, Ohio.

Here are some European continental Jewish centers prior to the 19th Century:

Paris, Bordeaux, Marseilles, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Frankfurt, Vienna, Hamburg, Berlin, Prague, Mainz, Padua, Mantua, Posen, Warsaw, Belgrade, Sarajevo, Istanbul, Leghorn, and Pisa.

The Ashkenazi Jews used a system of *patronymics*, i.e., taking the first given name of the father as their surname. Upon arrival in England they usually stabilized their name by adopting as a surname the patronymic then being used, or they took the name of the place from which they came. A patronymic may be such as *Joseph* or *Abrahams*. A place name such as *Bamburger* or *Frankfurter*.

The Sephardic Jews used the same names they had in their former country, and the name usually was influenced by the former Spanish associations, such as *Mendoza*, *Botibol*, and *Belinfante*. In other cases, many immigrants used coined names, such as *Goldstein*.

In naming their children, both groups followed certain patterns. The Sephardic Jews named the first two sons and first two daughters after the grandparents. The mother had the right to name the first son after her father and the father of the child named the first daughter after his mother. This, of course, was usual, but did not occur in every instance. In addition, even though the wife had the right to name the first son after her father, that right may not have been exercised.

The Ashkenazi Jews followed a similar custom except that it was against the law to name the children after anyone living, so that the grandparents' names were only used if they were deceased.

Persons who are descended from Jews settled in the British Isles should read the publications of various authors concerning the history of the Jews in England and British territories.¹

1. Some of these are as follows:

- i. Edgar R. Samuel, "Jewish Ancestors and Where To Find Them," *The Genealogists' Magazine*, London, vol. 11, page 412.
- ii. W. S. Samuel, "Sources of Anglo-Jewish Genealogy," *The Genealogists' Magazine*, London: 1932.
- iii. Archibald F. Bennett, "Jewish Genealogies," *Proving Your Pedigree*, Salt Lake City: 1951, Chapter 35.

Chapter Seventeen

THE ROMAN CATHOLICS AND THEIR RECORDS

IT is often difficult, especially prior to 1837, to trace the ancestry of persons of the Roman Catholic faith. Thus, it is important to know something of the historical background and record keeping system of the Roman Catholic Church in England.

In Chapter 15 "The Nonconformists, Their History and Records" there are some details of the religious upheavals that led to and followed the Reformation. When King Henry VIII broke with Rome in 1534 and became supreme head of the Church of England, this did not mean that all English and Welsh people automatically became Protestant. On the contrary, many, both rich and poor, did not agree with the dissolution of the monasteries, confiscation of church property, changing the forms of worship, rejection of certain dogmas, and the repudiation of Papal authority. Because of the lack of records it is not known which members of the poorer classes remained loyal to Roman Catholicism. There is evidence to show that many of the wealthier families and their servants, generation after generation, worshipped as Roman Catholics secretly in the private chapels and houses of the leading Catholic gentry.

During the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603), there was passed through Parliament "An Act for retaining the Queen's Subjects in their due Obedience" in the matters of religion. From that time it was a crime for a Roman Catholic priest to exercise his functions. Any person who received the ministrations of such a priest was guilty of high treason. Those who became too active in opposing the throne or who refused to attend the services of the Church of England were heavily fined or cast into prison.

The refusal to attend divine service at the parish church was termed *Recusancy*, and those persons involved were given the name *Recusants*. If they were Roman Catholics, they were called *Papal* or *Popish Recusants* as well as *Papists* and

Romanists. An example of the legal proceedings taken against them is to be found in an Order, dated 1663, from the East Riding of Yorkshire:

By virtue of an order of His Majesty's justices you are required to give notice to all the Church wardens and constables within your Division that they be personally present at the Quarter Sessions to be held at Pocklington the sixth day of October next to present to the Justices the monthly absence from Church of all manner of Popish Recusants within their towns and parishes, as likewise the names of the children of the said Recusants being nine years out or abiding with their said parents, and as near they can the age of the said children and the names of the servants of such recusants that they may according to law be entered on record.¹

There are many records that show that *Papists* were brought to task by the parish authorities for absence from the parish church at the time of "common prayer" on Sundays. Records, such as those of the Quarter Sessions, of the Assize Courts, of some peculiar courts and other courts to which such persons were summoned, and official records known as State Papers and the Exchequer Records, mention those who were convicted of recusancy and who suffered intensely by fine and imprisonment and were even put to death. The names, relationships, occupations, ages, residences, and important details of these staunch Catholics are preserved in these recusant and other official lists. Many books have been written concerning Roman Catholics who, in exile, prison, at the stake, or on the gallows suffered for their Catholic beliefs.

Because the Roman Catholics were in the minority, and due to the harshness of the laws from the middle of the 16th Century to about 1800, they did not have regular or open meeting places or the regular services of a priest. Many wealthy Catholic families had in their manor houses a "priest's hiding hole" available whenever there was a priest in the neighborhood. During such times a "Catholic Mission" probably existed. Such a mission covered a large area (including many widely scattered families), and did not have any relation to a parish boundary. The priest visited in secret, the Mass was celebrated, infants were christened, and Catholic marriages performed. It was not safe to keep any regular registers because if they fell into the hands of the officers of the realm,

1. *Catholic Record Society Publications*, London, 1907, Vol. 4. p. 267.

the evidence would have been used in the prosecution of everyone mentioned therein.

There were so many parents, both Protestant and Catholic, who failed to have their children christened by a Church of England clergyman, that it was necessary in 1695 to provide by an act of Parliament the imposition of a fine on parents who failed to inform the Church of England parish minister within five days of the birth of a child. The minister was also commanded to keep a separate reference of children born in the parish but not christened. The Act was widely ignored, and in 1706 Parliament had to pass an Act of Immunity in order to save the clergy from ruin through payments of penalties for non-compliance. Some parish registers have separate lists of *dissenters* that might include records of Roman Catholics as well as Protestant Nonconformists.

Many of the parish registers of the Church of England mention Roman Catholics, such as those of the parish of Stock in Essex, where it is noted: "These children were born in Stock Parish but not baptized by ye minister their parents being Papists." In the parish registers of St. Mary, Monmouth, appears, "1699 Mary daughter of James Cambell . . . was born, baptiz'd by a Popish priest." In 1704 is mentioned "Daniel son of James Cambel" without any notice as to being a *Papist*. It is pointed out in Volume 9, page 142, of the Catholic Record Society that the Church of England marriage in 1822 at St. Mary Monmouth was between a Roman Catholic, John Jones, and Martha Theakston. In instances where a marriage ceremony was performed by a Roman Catholic priest, the ceremony may have been re-performed in the Church of England in order to assure legal registration and to avoid fines. Such a legal form of marriage also preserved the social and civil status of the family and civilly legitimized any offspring. When a Roman Catholic died, if there were no special burial place, the burial had to be in the parish churchyard of the Church of England with the Protestant parish minister officiating. If this clergyman knew the deceased was a Roman Catholic, one might possibly find a comment in the parish registers such as "Papist," "Romanist," "Roman," "R.C." or some other similar designation. The following are a few examples taken from the registers of the Church of England:

Wigan Parish Church, Lancashire.

	Buried	Age
John son of Thomas Lowe of Scholes.	25 Jan. 1813	4 years ROMAN
Charles Parkinson of Frog Lane	1 July 1832	100 years ROMAN
Mary Hudson of Ince	20 Jan. 1838	31 years ROMAN
<i>Aston-le-Walls Parish Church, Northamptonshire.</i>		
Mary Waddups	buried 8 May 1833	aged 72 years R.C.

The Catholic Registers for Wigan, Lancashire commence in 1732, and for Aston-le-Walls, Northamptonshire, in 1815.

In 1701 Parliament passed an "Act of Settlement," which debarred for ever a Roman Catholic monarch from the throne. When Queen Anne of England died in 1714, the majority of the people favored a Protestant, and the Elector George of Hanover was proclaimed King George I of England. In 1715, James Stuart, supported by a faction of Roman Catholics who were known as *Jacobites*, commenced a rebellion or civil war that was soon suppressed. He is known as the "Old Pretender" because he pretended to the English throne as King James III since he was the only son of Roman Catholic King James II, who had been deposed in 1688. This uprising of the "Old Pretender" demonstrated to the government the danger that still existed from Roman Catholic sympathisers.

After King George I came to the throne in 1714, an Act was passed compelling all persons over the age of 18 years who held freehold, copyhold, or leasehold lands to take the "Oath of Allegiance." There was a rush of Protestants to take these oaths (or in the case of Quakers, *affirmations*), thereby giving assurance that they renounced any tendencies towards the Roman Catholic Church. The county records also include lists of persons who refused to obey this law. Many of these were *Popish Recusants*. Some Roman Catholics were poor persons who had no possessions and therefore were not compelled to take the oath of allegiance.

A further Act was passed in 1717 stating that all *Papists* should register their names and the value of their real estates with the county authorities. These registrations now provide important information on estates and probably contain all the names of Roman Catholics over the age of 21 years who

held property within each county, whether the property was freehold, copyhold or leasehold. Many of these Roman Catholic landlords did not reside on their estates but were residents in other parts of the country. These registrations contain certain duplications of estates, for, at the death of a registered holder, the next owner was registered. Probates of Roman Catholic landowners were often enrolled with the registration of the estate in question. Several counties have special lists of these probates, referred to as "Wills of Papists" or as a "Register of the Estates of Roman Catholics" or some other similar title.

Even though the Acts of Parliament mentioned brought about forfeiture of property held by Catholics, against whom special taxes were also levied, there were still some ardent Roman Catholics who continued to support the claims of the "Old Pretender." This resulted in the rebellion of 1745 when Charles Edward Stuart, "Bonnie Prince Charlie or The Young Pretender" and his followers, the *Jacobites*, attempted to seize the throne unsuccessfully.

Throughout these troublesome times, Roman Catholic priests and schoolmasters, who had to travel throughout the country in secret, were liable to imprisonment. The Roman Catholics generally were in no position to contest any grievances in the courts of law. It was not until thirty-three years after the Rebellion of 1745 that the first Roman Catholic Relief Bill was passed by Parliament in 1778. This Act was "Intituled an act to relieve upon Conditions and under restrictions the persons therein described from certain penalties and disabilities to which, Papists or persons professing the Popish Religion are by Law subject." This is known sometimes as the repeal of the *Penal Laws*. The period of these laws, from the time of the Reformation until 1778, is often referred to by Catholic writers as the *Penal Times*.

Among the finest relative publications of a genealogical nature are those of the "Catholic Record Society." The title page of the first volume, published in 1905, states the following:

The Catholic Record Society was founded June 10, 1904, for printing and distributing to its Members original Records, both historical and genealogical, relative to English Catholics since the Reformation.²

2. *Ibid*, 1905.

Since then, over forty-eight substantial volumes have been published. Many of these contain copies of Roman Catholic registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials. Other registers and records are being printed as fast as scholarly voluntary help is found to transcribe them. In Catholic registers the recording of baptisms of children seems to have been most important. The listing of the names of the sponsors of the child, that is, the godfathers and godmothers, is noteworthy, as these were often relatives of the family concerned. Few deaths and burials were recorded unless the Catholic mission had a burial ground. Of the few marriages recorded, some are dated prior to 1754, in which year an Act of Parliament to prevent clandestine marriages was enforced. In order to comply with the civil law, many Catholics went through a legal form of marriage in the Church of England, but were also married secretly by a Roman Catholic priest in accordance with Catholic requirements. Often, these marriages were not recorded. In the Catholic Record Society publications will be found this information:

Some priests ceased recording marriages after 1754 because there was already a legal registry in the parish registers, similar to the note in the (Catholic) registers of Holme in Spalding Moor, where between 1754 and 1764 the priest kept no marriage registers.³

After the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, Roman Catholics could openly attend the sessions courts of the county and take an Oath of Allegiance, and so from 1778 onwards many of their names are recorded in the county records. The researcher of a family pedigree might examine the entries of the family as contained in the Church of England parish registers, and see if these particular families are represented in the records of Oaths of Allegiance, when such are extant in the counties concerned. An example is to be found in the Publications of the Catholic Record Society. Note that the Editor in the following examples has shown entries from Church of England registers that refer to Catholics, although the actual parish registers do not mention that fact. He also shows entries from the records of those who took the Oath of Allegiance in 1778. Here are two examples:

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 9, p. 180.

3 August 1778: Dorothy Jones)
Jane Embry) of Monmouth⁴
Maria Embry)

Married 1776 Thomas Embry and Maria Jones
Married by licence
Witnesses: John Powell Lorymer, Thomas
Phillips.⁵

The registers kept by Roman Catholic priests are generally known as *Catholic Registers*. The following notes will assist in determining where these records may be:

- i. The Catholic Church was requested in 1837 to place its records in the custody of the Registrar General, London. Because of internal administration problems, most Catholic officials declined, and retained the records in the Catholic mission or chapel concerned.
- ii. A complete list of those few Catholic registers that were deposited with the Registrar General is available.⁷ They all date prior to 1837. In the list there are only 79 chapels for all of England and Wales. For a table showing the number of Catholic Registers in the General Register Office at Somerset House, London, see Chapter 15.⁸

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. 9, p. 134.

5. *Ibid.*, page 141. The parties to the marriage and the witnesses are described as all being Catholics, although the Church of England parish register of St. Mary, Monmouth, makes no such statement.

6. See Chapter 4, "Civil Registration of Births, Marriages, and Deaths."

7. *Lists of Non-Parochial Registers and Records in the Custody of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages*, London 1838 and 1841. *op. cit.*

8. See Chapter 15, "The Nonconformists, Their History and Records."

In the case of Lancashire, only one Roman Catholic chapel deposited registers with the Registrar General, Somerset House, London. In the publication, *The Genealogists' Atlas of Lancashire*,⁹ mention is made of seventy Roman Catholic chapels having registers that are not deposited with the Registrar General, Somerset House, London, but are in the custody of the local Roman Catholic priest. In other counties there might be a parallel of these conditions.

There is still a vast field of Catholic genealogical material to be gathered. It appears that all *Catholic Registers* that have been transcribed, have been published, but that progress in transcribing is slow. There is no reliable list of existing registers of Catholic chapels and missions. The best way to find out whether any particular locality has a *Catholic Register* covering any particular period, is to use the *Catholic Directory*,¹⁰ and to write to each Roman Catholic parish to ascertain the date of its foundation and to obtain details of the existing registers. It is also wise to request information of any nearby Catholic burial ground where there may be tombstones.

English Roman Catholics often use distinctive Roman Catholic given or Christian names, such as the names of certain saints. For example, *Theresa, Christabell, Cecilia, Veronica, Magdalen, Josephine, Michael, Sylvester, Benedict*. In families where these and other such names are found, it may indicate Roman Catholic affiliation.

Irish Catholics and others who came to England to settle are also sometimes easy to pick out because of their Christian names, as well as their surnames. It is wise, when these names are found, to check the records of the Roman Catholic chapel.

The following publications, not previously mentioned, are of help in tracing Catholic pedigrees:

- i. Joseph Gillow, *The Biographical Dictionary of English Catholics*, Vols. 1-5 (1885).
- ii. Dr. Henry Foley, *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus*, London: 1877.

9. *The Genealogists' Atlas of Lancashire*, J. P. Smith, Liverpool: 1930.

10. *The Catholic Directory*, London: Burns, Oats and Washburne, Limited, 28 Ashley Place, London, S.W. 1, England. This is published annually.

- iii. Archibald F. Bennett, "Catholic Registers," *Proving Your Pedigree*, Salt Lake City: 1951 Chapter 25.
- iv. Various publications of county records of England, such as *Quarter Sessions Records*; also by historical and other societies in the various counties. One should check therein for mention of *Recusants*, *Papists*, *Romanists*, *Catholics*.

Chapter Eighteen

SURNAMES — GIVEN NAMES — DIALECT

IT is important to know something about these subjects as a knowledge of them can be of considerable help in simplifying research problems.

Surnames.

Many good books have been written about surnames, their meanings, origin, and how they came to be used, but it is possible to mention only a few of the principal points here.

There is evidence to show that surnames were in use prior to the Norman Conquest, but it was several centuries afterwards before they came into general use. By 1538, when parish registers were first kept, most English people were using surnames. There are many sources which provided surnames, and the modern interpretation of the meaning of a particular surname may not always be right.

Here are some of the things from which surnames have been derived:

- a. The names of animals, e.g. *Woollard* (Compounded from the Anglo-Saxon *wolf*)
- b. Trees, plants and birds, e.g. *Oake*, *Thistle*, *Sparrow*
- c. War and warlike occupations, e.g. *Garrod*, *Garrett* (bloody spear)
- d. The sea and sea life, e.g. *Farman* (the Old Norse *farmadr*, meaning sailor)
- e. Relationship, e.g. *Fairbrother* (from the Danish *Farbroder*, meaning Uncle)
- f. Hero worship, e.g. *Lightfoot* (a companion of *Hereward* the Wake)
- g. Occupations, e.g. *Slaughter* (from the old Friesic *slatet* meaning a maker, repairer or cleaner of ditches)
- h. Given names, e.g. *Johnson* (son of John), *Watson* (son of Walter)

There are many surnames of more recent development, and the meaning of a particular surname cannot be assumed

from its modern spelling. For instance, the name *Thoroughgood* does not mean what it might imply in modern language, but is a derivation of the surname *Thurgood* which originated in Denmark and was associated with the pagan god, *Thor*. Both versions are found in the parish registers of East Anglia. Likewise, the surname *Goodluck* has nothing to do with favorable fortune but is believed to be a corruption of the Scandinavian name *Guthlac*.

The following amusing poem on local surnames appeared originally in the old *Hackney Magazine*, London:

HACKNEY SURNAMES¹

*If the surnames in Hackney be read through with care,
There are certainly some will be found very rare:
Such as Bull, Buck, and Peacock, a Bond and a Freeman,
A Hog and a Lyon, a Land-on and Seaman:
A Hawke and a Partridge, a Swan and a Jay,
White, Callow, and Brown, Black, Green and a Gray;
A Monk and a Prior, a Pope and a King,
Some Bells and some Bowes, an Offor and King;
A Grounds and an Arewater, Frost, Snow, and Hale,
Greenwood and Woodifield, Montaigne and Vale.
A Man and a Child a Knight and a Day,
A Farmer and Squires, Heath, Oldfield and May;
A Jackson, a Johnson, a Long and a Longman,
A Large and a Little, a Short and a Shortman.
An Archer and Bowman, a Shepherd and Crook,
A Fountain and Bowerbank, Arber and Brook;
A Temple, a Hovell, a Street and a Church,
Thorowgood, Masters, Young, Children, and Birch.
A Dean and a Bishop, a Fox and a Guy,
Goode, Hogsflesh and Salmon, Dabbs, Bacon and Fry;
Fatt, Cook, and a Kitching, a Gosling and Drake,
Keyes, Lock and Wards, Flint, Steel and a Rake.
Cwe, Pitts, and a Hole, Wells, Bridges and Ford,
A Penny and Argent, and Riches and Ord;
A Sargant and Banner, a Cannon and Major,
That these names may be found we would bet any wager.*

It is folly to assume that because the family surname is *Wood* that all persons surnamed *Wood* are related. When surnames began to be used, there were many wooded areas, and unrelated people in different parts of the country, chose *Wood* as a surname because they lived near a wood. Similarly, occupational names were adopted by unrelated families,

1. Quoted in *Memorials of St. John at Hackney*. Guildford: 1882.

names like *Smith* and *Gardner*. Therefore, it must not be concluded that persons having the same surname are *all* descended from a common ancestor who first used that surname.

Given Names.

The majority of early given names were either biblical (e.g. *Nathaniel*, *Ezekiel*, *David*) or historical (e.g. *Horatio*, *Horace*) or royal (e.g. *William*, *George*, *Elizabeth*) or after a patron saint (e.g. *Benedict*, *Mary*, *Peter*, *James*).

Later on, the names of flowers were used as girls names. Then in more recent times families have coined entirely new given names, for example, *Selvoy*, derived from the ancestral surname of *Sell* and *Desla* derived from *Slade*.

In some parts of England a child may be given the maiden surname of its mother as its given name. For example, *Wilson Rawling*, born in 1846 in Kirby Grindalyth, Yorkshire, was the son of John Rawling and his wife, Mary, whose maiden surname was *Wilson*. Such occurrences are very helpful in assisting in the determining of correct ancestry. This must not, however, be confused with the system of patronymics used by the Welsh.

Many persons state when analysing their research problems, that in looking through the parish register, they notice families of the same surname as theirs, using the same given names as those used by their own family. Then they erroneously assume that they must be related. On further enquiry the given names to which they refer are common names in any family, like *George*, *Edward*, and *William*!

There are localities where certain given names are used synonymously. In the industrial areas of Lancashire, West Yorkshire, and other places, the names *Sally* and *Sarah* are used interchangeably. For example, the parish registers of Deane, Lancashire, record that in 1815 *John Hampson* married *Sally Makinson*, but when all the children were christened, the parents were listed as *John* and *Sarah*.

An example of the use of *Ann* and *Agnes* interchangeably, appears in the parish registers of Lammas, Norfolk:

4 June	1616	Henry Woodcocke married Agnes Stokes.
4 Oct.	1617	Christ'r son of Henry Woodcocke bap.
28 May	1620	John son of Henry Woodcocke bap.

24 Feb.	1621/2	Edward son of Henry and Ann Woodcocke bap.
12 Sep.	1624	Eliz'th dau of Henry and Anne Woodcocke bap.
10 Feb.	1626/7	Rose dau of Henry and Anne Woodcocke bap.
19 July	1629	Thomas son of Henry and Agnes Woodcocke bap.

Here is an example of the use of *Ann* and *Hannah* interchangeably taken from the parish registers of Castle Heddingham, Essex:

10 Nov.	1743	John Eldger married <i>Hannah</i> Grub
7 July	1745	John son of John and <i>Hannah</i> Eldger bap
26 July	1747	Anne dau of John and Ann Elgar bap
13 Sep.	1760	John Elgar buried
3 Nov.	1760	<i>Hannah</i> Elgar widow buried.

There are no other families of this surname in the parish during the same period.

A few other examples are *Peggy* for *Margaret*; *Mally*, *Molly*, and *Polly* for *Mary*; *Jenny* for *Jane*; *Nancy* for *Ann*, and *Betty* for *Elizabeth*.

Care should be taken in the consideration of such possibilities. Imagination should not be worked overtime "inventing" others which may not be synonymous at all. Even among those listed it is often found that two children are given similar names. An example of this is found in the parish registers of Oldham St. Mary:

22 Sep.	1754	<i>Ann</i> and <i>Anna</i> daus. of Joseph and Ann Wilde of Highermoor Fold, bap.
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It is possible that there may be irregular diminutives appearing from time to time, but additional evidence should be sought to substantiate the conclusion. The Scottish types of synonymous names should not be confused with the English. Scotland has many wider uses of synonymous names and is a country with customs of its own.

When children bear more than one given name, a research problem may arise. For instance, a child named *Sarah Ann* will appear in the 1841 census as *Sarah* or as *Ann* because the enumerators were instructed to write down only one given name. As an example of this, the following will show what may happen:

At Damerham in Wiltshire, 23 December 1837 was born *Henry Thomas* the son of Charles Stainer and his wife, *Sarah*, formerly *Tiller*.

In the 1841 census this boy does not appear as *Henry Thomas* but as *Thomas*.

Here is the family as recorded by the enumerator:

1841 Census of North End, Damerham, Wiltshire

Charles	Stainer	35	Y
Sarah	do	25	Y
George	do	12	Y
Elizabeth	do	9	Y
THOMAS	do	3	Y

In the 1851 census the boy *Henry Thomas* is still called plain *Thomas* so the name *Henry* may have been dropped so far as common usage is concerned, but who knows if *Thomas*, later in life, decided to use *Henry* exclusively and not *Thomas*, or use *Thomas Henry*? Incidents such as this make it difficult to obtain birth certificates from Somerset House, London, unless it is known what name was given a child at registration. Using the 1841 census as a sole guide, one would never find the birth certificate of the above *Thomas Stainer*. His reference in the birth indexes appears as *Henry Thomas Stainer*. Particularly in the case of a common surname, *Henry Thomas Smith*, may be pages away from those children indexed as *Thomas Smith*.

In a case like this, the local superintendent registrar may be more helpful and this is described fully in another chapter.²

Dialect.

Dialect is the peculiar form which a language develops in a particular locality and is usually conspicuous for its peculiarities of vocabulary, pronunciation, and usage. It presents many difficult situations to trap the unwary, especially those not having firsthand knowledge of the locality.

Each area of the country has its own way of pronouncing words. And since the uniform way of spelling words is comparatively modern, names and places were written down as they sounded to the recorder, or as he thought they should be spelled. This is an actuality that some American researchers find difficult to understand.

2. See Chapter 4, "Civil Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages."

One of the most frequent and easy-to-overlook peculiarities is the misuse of the aspirate. Sometimes the letter "H" is dropped from the front of a name when it should not be, and sometimes it is placed in front when it should have been left off. As an example of this, the parish registers of Quarrington, Lincolnshire, shows a *Hare* family, but the aspirate has not been used in one of the entries. Here is the record of two of the children in this family:

29 July 1795 James son of James and Eleanor *Hare* bap.

7 Dec. 1800 Ellinor dau of James and Eleanor *Aire* bap.

The family name was later changed to *Eyre* by which version it is now known in America.

In the parish registers of Surfleet, Lincolnshire, Robert and Sarah *Inkley* have a number of children recorded. Their child christened in 1826, however, is described as the daughter of Robert and Sarah *Hinkley*. It would not be very surprising if a *Henry Hocken* from *Eccles* in Lancashire stated "I'm 'Arry 'Ockings from Heccles."

Careful attention should therefore be given to any surname beginning with a vowel or the aspirate. When using indexes, the misuse of the aspirate should always be taken into consideration.

Some variations in the spelling of surnames caused by local pronunciation are somewhat obvious, but others are not. *Williamson* has been seen recorded as *Wilmerson* in East Anglia, also *Ascough* for *Askew*. At Yoxford, Suffolk, a family is variously spelled *Keable* and *Cable*. A family of *Gibb* from near Chard in Somerset is found recorded under the spellings of *Geeb*, *Geep*, *Gabe*, and *Geab*. One interesting case is that of Betty *Geab* recorded in the 1851 census, whose death was subsequently registered and appears in the indexes at Somerset House under the spelling of *Gabe*. Although her burial at the parish church of Merriott is written *Elizabeth Gibb*, it was not until every entry recorded in the week of her death at the local superintendant's register office was checked, that the spelling *Gabe* was discovered.

In the parish register of Patcham, Sussex, appears the baptism on 14 October 1716, of *Susanna*, daughter of Richard and Sarah *Ade*, whereas in the Bishop's Transcripts of the same parish appears the entry of 14 October 1716,

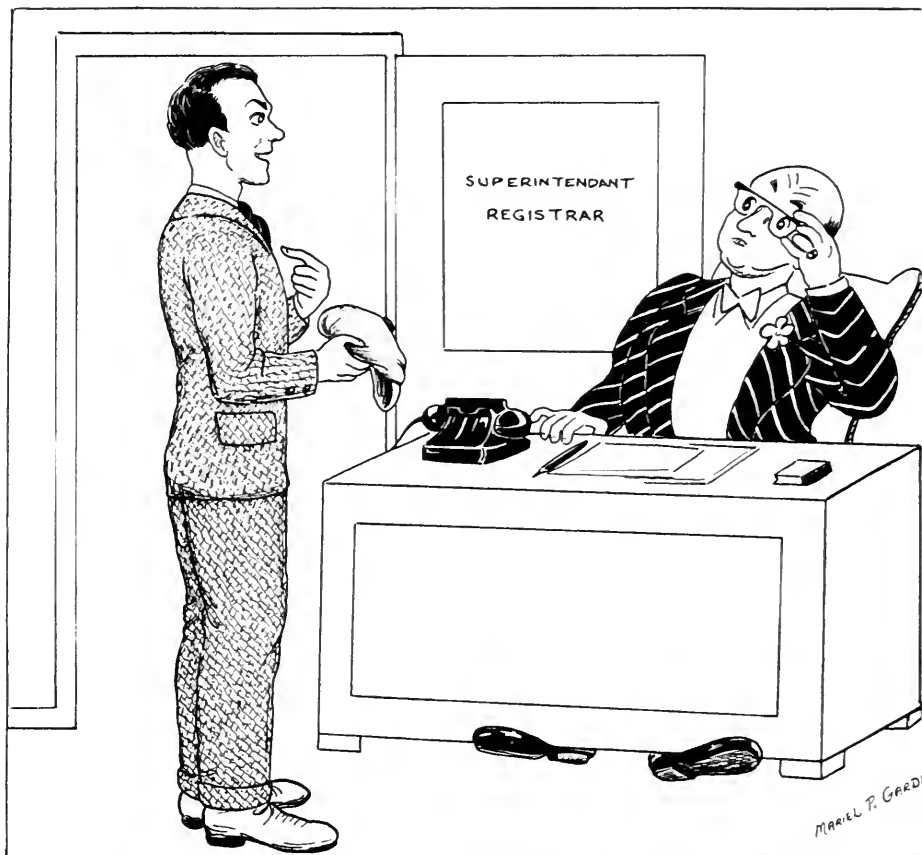


PLATE I. "I'm 'Arry 'Ockings from 'Heccles.' "

Susannah daughter of Richard and Sarah Eard. Perhaps it can be assumed that the one who wrote the Bishop's Transcript may have had the entries from the register dictated to him, so he wrote a phonetic form of the surname *Ade*.

A good example of broad accent and phonetic spelling occurs in the registers of Chester le Street, County Durham.

First, the following marriage appears:

29 October 1733 James *Blackbird* and Margaret Brown of Ouston, married.

Then the children appear as follows:

chr. 3 Feb. 1733/4 Jane dau of James *Blackbird* (of) Ouston.
 chr. 12 Oct. 1735 Matthew son of James *Blakeburn* (of) Ouston.
 chr. 26 Feb. 1737/8 Elizabeth dau of James *Blackbird* (of) Ouston
 chr. 8 June 1740 George son of James *Blackburn* (of) Ouston.
 chr. 27 June 1742 Mary dau of James *Blackburn* (of) Ouston.
 chr. 3 Feb. 1744/5 James son of James *Blakeburn* (of) Ouston.
 chr. 18 Oct. 1747 Margaret dau of James *Blakeburn* (of) Ouston.

The following was also found:

bur. 16 Feb. 1748/9 Margaret *Blackbird*. Ouston.

Here is one surname spelled three different ways, *Blackbird*, *Blackburn* and *Blakeburn*. One can easily understand this variety upon hearing this broad north-country accent. These can be three different surnames and may occur as such in other parts of the country. These examples do not serve as an excuse for individuals to put private interpretations on surname spellings and thus mix two or more families. Both care and experience are needed in making these decisions.

Local pronunciation of *place names* is a stumbling block for the unwary.³ For example, in the 1851 census, a person was stated to have been born at *Haseboro*, Suffolk, but there is no such place. It was not traced until a local authority in that county, conversant with the local dialects, explained that it was the local pronunciation of *Happisburgh*, a small parish on the coast. Likewise, *Bicester*, in Oxfordshire, is pronounced *Bister*; *Barugh Green* in Yorkshire is pronounced *Bark Green*; and the example of *Cholmondley*, Cheshire, pronounced *Chumley* is probably well known. In Wales the problem can be even more difficult because of Welsh accents being misunderstood. For instance, the small place, *Rhoslanerchrugog*, was recorded *Rosannaswgregog*. In another

3. The Publications of the English Place-Name Society should be studied for scholarly treatment of the whole subject. Between 1924 and 1954, 24 volumes were published. These concern about eighteen out of forty English counties. (English Place-Name Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, London and New York). (At the Library, Genealogical Society, the call number is Eng. Pub. Z. followed by the volume number desired.).
 The *Victoria Histories* of various counties, published by the University of London, are also of aid in tracing places.

case, a person stated he was born at *Llangrallo*, a place not listed in the modern gazetteers. This eventually proved to be the Welsh name for the parish of *Coychurch*, Glamorgan-shire. Some Welsh parishes and villages are indexed in gazetteers and topographies under both the Welsh and the English form of the names, but this does not apply in all cases.⁴

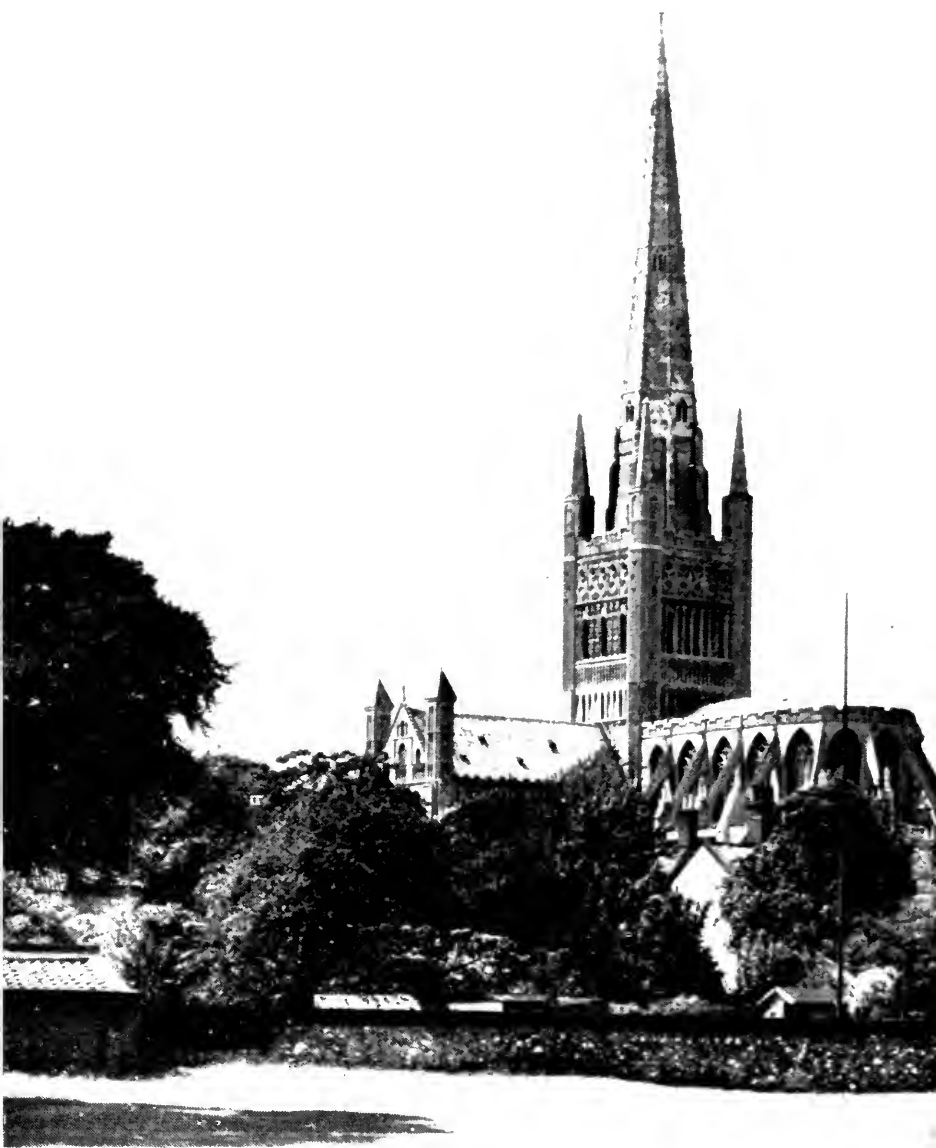
A general thought about dialect should be repeatedly and constantly kept in mind. Never forget that until about one hundred years ago, very few people could read, fewer could write, and still fewer could spell, and often names and places were written as they were thought they ought to be spelled by the recorder.

4. In the library of the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City is a typescript gazetteer: *A Gazetteer of Wales* (5 volumes, compiled by Ellen Hill, 1953, typescript.). (Library call number R10A18.) This does not include Monmouth-shire.

The Board of Celtic Studies, The University, Cardiff, Glamorgan, S. Wales is preparing for publication in 1956 the *Gazetteer of Welsh Place Names*. This publication will give place names and indicate whether they are towns, parishes, villages, and natural features.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

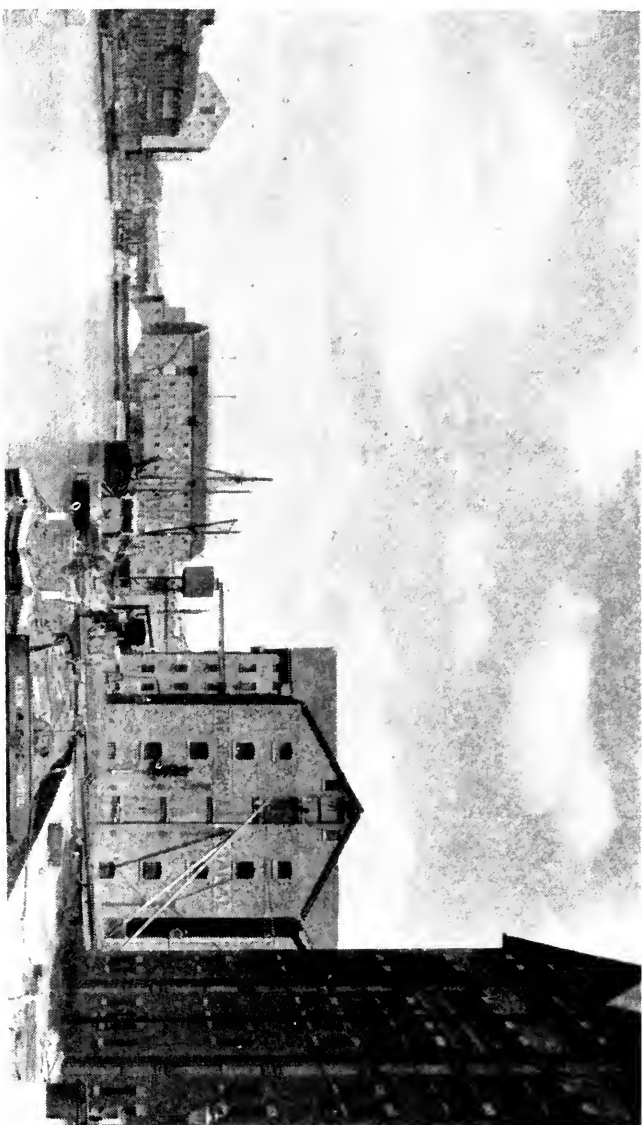
But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. (James 1:5-6)



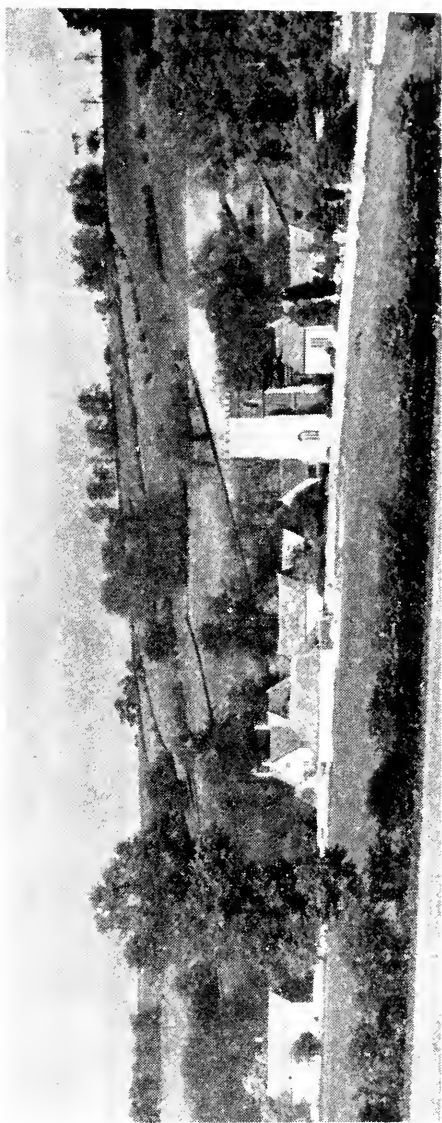
The Cathedral at Norwich, where parish registers exist as early as the 17th century. There are 39 such ancient parishes in the city each with its own registers. No Norwich city pedigree can be accurately determined unless searches are made in the registers of all 39 parishes.



Part of Colne, Lancashire, once a small village. The population had increased in 1801 to over 3,000 and by 1851 had grown to over 8,000. At the present time the population is over 22,000. The photograph shows the mills on the right and the workers' homes on the left. Note the terraced homes all joined together, a product of 19th century industrialism.



Part of the inland port of Gloucester City. If the family one is tracing sailed these barges between Gloucester and Bristol, where were they on the night the 1851 census was taken? It may be necessary to search the census of the whole of these two cities and also every village situated on the banks of the Bristol Channel and the River Severn. The two cities are about 50 miles apart by the river.



Guiting Power, a small parish in Gloucestershire with a population of 690 in 1851. Typical of this and other agricultural areas, it is unlikely that an ancestry will be found in such a parish for more than one or two generations.



THE PARISH CHURCH AT BAKEWELL, DERBYSHIRE

In this and certain other parts of the country, the parish is very large in area, covering many miles of moorland and scattered homes. In such localities one should be aware of the possibility of children not being brought to church immediately to be christened because of distance, poor roads, and bad weather. Thus one may find many children being buried for whom no christening can be traced. It is also possible that the christening of children was overlooked, when they were not christened soon after birth. Thus one should search for several years after the birth of the child for the christening entry in case the whole family were all christened on the same day. Occasionally the christening took place shortly before the marriage of that individual, probably because a particular minister would not marry an unbaptized child.



LONDON, CAPITAL CITY OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH
In 1851, the metropolis had 533,000 families, of 2,362,000 persons, occupying 305,000 houses. The photograph shows the Houses of Parliament (the seat of government) and Westminster Abbey, overlooking the River Thames. London, a great seaport, has numerous manufacturers and is the market for the world. Research for a pedigree in London, where there are well over one hundred ancient parishes, is difficult, painstaking, expensive.

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This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
 This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
 This other Eden, demi-paradise,
 This fortress built by nature for herself
 Against infection and the hand of war,
 This happy breed of men, this little world,
 This precious stone set in the silver sea,
 Which serves it in the office of a wall
 Or as a moat defensive to a house,
 Against the envy of less happier lands,
 This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.

William Shakespeare
 (King Richard II)

Mae hen wlad fy nhadau yn annwyl i mi,
 Gwlad bierdd a chantorion, enwogion o fri;
 Ei gwrol ryfelwyr, gwladgarwyr tra mad,
 Tros ryddid gollasant eu gwaed.
 Gwlad, gwlad, pleidiol wyf i'm gwlad,
 Tra mor yn fur i'r bur hoff bau,
 O bydded i'r heniaith barhau.

Evan James

(English Translation)

The land of my fathers, the land of my choice,
 The land in which poets and minstrels rejoice;
 The land whose stern warriors were true to the core,
 While bleeding for freedom of yore.
 Wales! Wales! fav'rite land of Wales!
 While sea her wall, may naught befall
 To mar the old language of Wales.

Ebenezer Thomas (Eben Vardd)

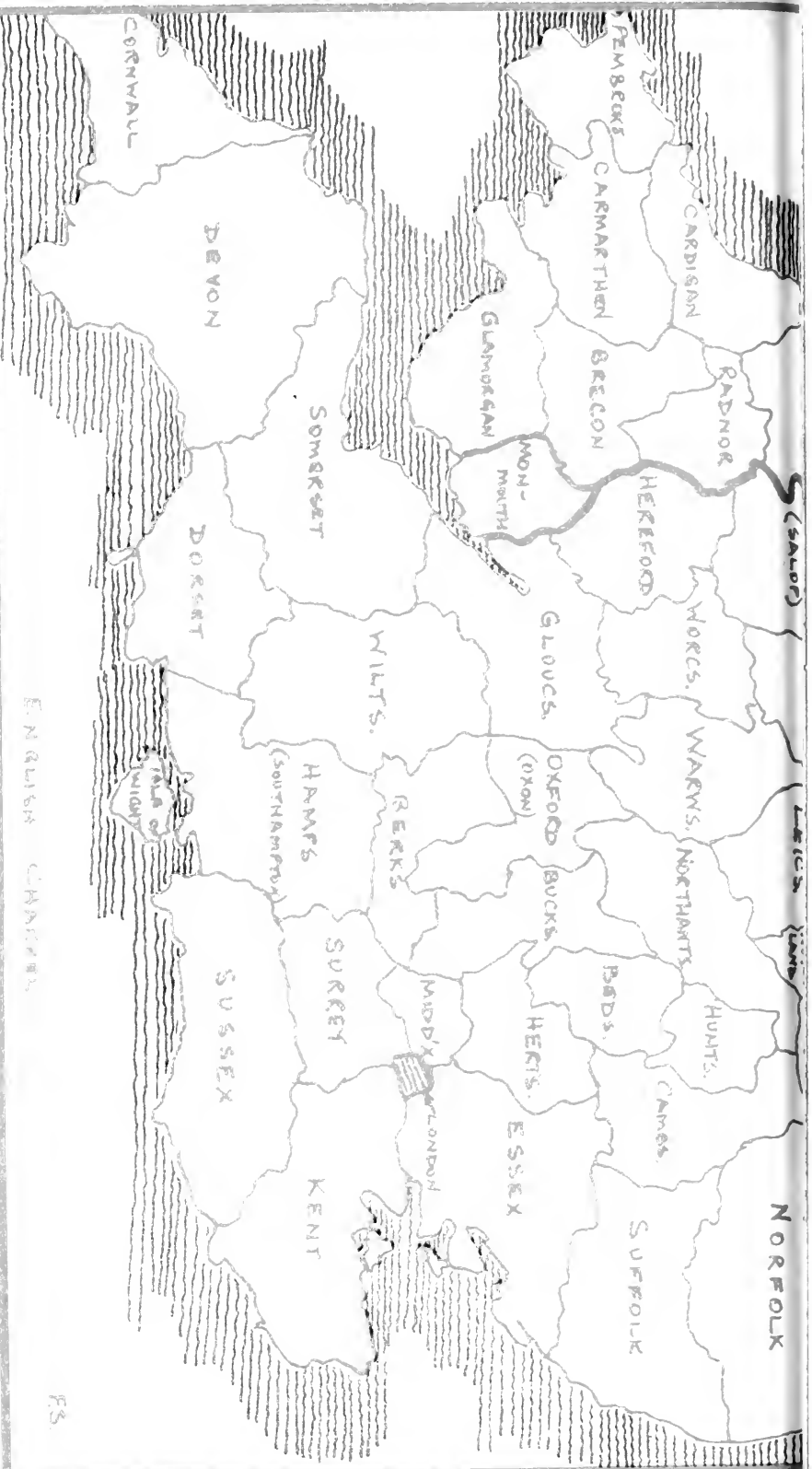
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